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SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

STICKNEY

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Swiss Family Robinson. — Frontispiece.

THE

SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

EDITED FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS

BY

J. H. STICKNEY

GINN AND COMPANY
BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · LONDON

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INTRODUCTION.

THE story of the "Swiss Family Robinson" is founded on the report of the captain of a Russian vessel, who, on one of his voyages, discovered a group of fertile islands, situated towards the south-east of Java, and not far distant from New Guinea. On landing on one of these, the crew were greatly surprised to find it inhabited by a family consisting of a father, mother, and four sons, who informed the captain of the circumstances which had placed them in such a position.

The father related that he had been a Swiss pastor or clergyman, and in the Revolution of 1798 had lost all his property. He therefore resolved to become a missionary, and for this purpose proceeded to England, and there obtained an appointment among the savage tribes of Otaheite. From thence he intended to proceed to Port Jackson in New South Wales (now Tasmania), and remain to work his way in that newly-formed colony.

He and his family sailed from England with other passengers, and continued their voyage prosperously till they arrived near the coast of New Guinea.

Here they were overtaken by a fearful storm, and it is in the moment when its fierceness is at its height that the author has chosen to commence his story.

The father of the family tells the tale; and the vicissitudes through which he and his wife and children pass, the wonderful discoveries they make, and the dangers they encounter, form the story of the "Swiss Family Robinson."

The author was Johann David Wyss, a descendant of an old citizen family of the town of Berne, in Switzerland. It was originally related to his four children, but never printed. For our possession of it we are indebted to one of his sons, the well-known Professor Johann Rudolf Wyss, who placed his father's story in the hands of a printer.

The first edition appeared in German, at Zurich, in 1813, but the story extended over only ten or twelve years, the arrival of a ship from Europe at the end of that period enabling the Swiss family to return to their native country.

Madame de Montolieu, when translating this tale into French in 1824, suggested to the author's son that he should make a different ending; but he was, as it appears, too much occupied to undertake such a task. The accomplished French authoress, however, obtained his permission to complete the story herself.

The writer of the following pages has adhered to the form of the tale as it appears in the German of M. Wyss, with the additions made by the Baroness Montolieu in the more modern German editions.

PREFACE.

AMONG the many and varied editions of the "Swiss Family Robinson," no single one takes such precedence over others as to give it place in this series.

Of translations claiming to be literal and unabridged, two excellent but of necessity lengthy ones have come from the German directly, and one through the French.

Another, perhaps by reason of copious illustration, the one most in use as a gift-book, attempts to modernize the story to adapt it to present tastes and times; but the father of to-day finds the Swiss family of his son's acquaintance, people quite unlike those of his own boyhood.

Still other editions, regarding the book as incomplete, introduce savage tribes, and missionaries, incidents unknown in early editions, and altogether inferior in conception to the work of Johan Wyss.

Like most narrative works of the early part of this century, the "Swiss Family Robinson" will bear pruning without loss of truth or interest; for it is not on account of literary style that the book is a classic.

Progress in the arts and sciences, and increase in means for general information, render unnecessary many of the Swiss Pastor's detailed explanations; so that an edition of to-day may, for the sake of brevity, safely sacrifice something of the natural history, the teaching of which constitutes a part of the purpose and charm of the book.

But beyond these limits abridgment cannot go without essential loss to the whole, — a fact which has sometimes been overlooked.

The aim of the present volume has been to reproduce the story as concisely as is consistent with completeness by a careful comparison of the best renderings — the basis being the translation of Mrs. H. B. Paull, translator of the works of Hans Andersen, Grimm Brothers, and other classics. Other editions to which the editor is most indebted are those of Routledge Bros., and the vivacious adapted story by John Lovell.

Nothing is needful to commend the book itself to its own public. It is a work of genius, or it could not have achieved the reputation it has in all languages. There is hardly a man of to-day, who has read at all, to whom its incidents and lessons are not familiar, and hardly a child — certainly not a boy — who is not destined to read the book, and find it, when taken all in all, the rival of "Robinson Crusoe," in whose line it follows.

No attempt is made to reconcile the incongruity of northern bears with tropical serpents in a region where both the apple and cocoanut flourish. As has been said, "Early critics have observed that the lobster of Massachusetts Bay, the flamingo of Africa, the jackal of Asia Minor, and the buffalo of our western plains had never met, excepting in a zoölogical garden and on the neutral ground of the Swiss Pastor's Happy Island; but children were happily indifferent to their criticism."

Again and again do boys who have whole libraries at their disposal turn from new books to find in the Swiss Family healthful delight in legitimate adventure, and a stimulus to invention in the ready use of ways and means which characterized the lives of the Swiss Robinsons.

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SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON.

CHAPTER I.

SHIPWRECKED AND ALONE.

THE storm, which had lasted for six long and terrible days, appeared on the seventh to redouble its fury. We were driven out of our course far to the south-east, and all trace of our position was lost.

Sailors and passengers alike were worn out with fatigue and long watching: indeed, all hope of saving the ship had disappeared. The masts were split, the sails rent, and the water in the hold from a leak made us expect every moment to be swallowed up in the waves.

Nothing could now be heard but earnest prayers to God for mercy — each commending his soul to his Maker, knowing that his power alone could save from death.

My boys stood clinging to their mother, and trembling with fear, in our little cabin.

"Children," said I, "God can save us if it is his will: if not, we must resign ourselves to what he judges is best for us; and to die will be to meet again in a better world, where partings are unknown."

My poor wife wiped her tears and became calm, to give courage to her boys; yet, while endeavoring to comfort my family, I could scarcely restrain my own grief.

We knelt together, and offered united prayers to the

Almighty: my eldest boy, Fritz, prayed aloud most earnestly that God would save his dear parents and brothers, seeming not to think at all of his own safety; and the faith of childhood in the power of the prayers they uttered restored my own.

All at once above the fury of the storm was heard the cry, "Land, land!" but at the same moment we felt a shock so violent that I believed the ship had struck on a rock, and would immediately fall to pieces. The sounds of cracking timber, and the rush of water over the decks, quickly proved that I was not mistaken, especially when the voice of the captain made itself heard in terrible tones, "We are lost! Lower the boats!"

"Lost!" I exclaimed in my terror; but the piteous cries of my children aroused me. I must not allow them to despair at this awful moment. "Keep up your courage!" I cried: "God can help us still. Let us trust in him. I will go at once and try to discover whether some way of deliverance may not be left for us."

I went quickly on deck; but, as I endeavored to advance, wave after wave passed over me. The first dashed me to the ground; but I struggled to withstand the force of the next by clinging to the side of the ship.

What a sight presented itself! One boat was far out to sea; and a sailor — the last to leap on board the other boat — was about to cut the rope and let it drift away. When I realized that they were escaping, and had left me and my dear ones to perish, I raised my voice in earnest entreaty. I cried, I prayed, I implored them to return and rescue us; but my voice was lost amid the roar of the storm; and, even had I been heard, the fury of the waves made the return of the boats an impossibility.

I looked around me in despair. Then, with a sudden

hope, I observed the position of the vessel. The bow had sunk forward, leaving the stern high above the water as far as a kind of partition, situated amidships, which separated the captain's and the other cabins from the steerage of the ship: the wreck was fixed between two rocks, and therefore likely to remain in safety, especially if the storm abated. A few moments served me to realize the absence of immediate danger, and I turned my attention towards the shore. A misty rain obscured the view, and perhaps made it appear more barren and desolate; yet I determined to strain every nerve in an effort to reach a spot upon which I now placed my hopes of safety. I went below to the cabin, and addressed my dear ones hopefully.

"Take courage, my children," I said as I entered, "all hope is not lost. The ship is fixed between the rocks, and this little place of refuge is high above the water. To-morrow, if the wind and waves subside, we may be able to reach the land."

The hopefulness of childhood enabled my boys to receive this news with transports of joy; they passed at once from despair to unbounded confidence. My wife discovered my hidden anxiety in spite of my calmness; yet I knew by her manner that her confidence in God was unshaken, and this gave me new courage.

Her first act was to search in the steward's room for provisions, and with such success that a plentiful supper was quickly prepared for us.

"Let us take food," she said: "nourishment for the body gives strength to the spirit, and we may have a very disturbed night."

And so it proved. The three younger boys retired to rest, and were soon fast asleep, overcome with fatigue and excitement. Fritz, the eldest, a youth of fourteen, under-

stood our position more clearly, and preferred to share the watch with his parents.

As night advanced, the storm continued, and the waves broke over the lower part of the ship with undiminished fury. From time to time a cracking noise told us that the planks and beams of the wreck were strained by their force, and a continual trembling caused a dread that the vessel might at any moment fall in pieces.

After one of these shocks Fritz exclaimed: —

"Father, do you think we could find swimming-belts on board for mother and the boys? You and I could swim on shore if any thing happened to the wreck; but they cannot swim."

"Not a bad thought, my boy," I replied. "We will search at once."

But no swimming-belts could be obtained, and I determined to contrive a plan which I hoped would prove successful. In the steward's cabin we found a number of empty flasks and tin water-cans strong enough to support a light person in the waves. These we fastened together with pocket-handkerchiefs, to tie under the armpits of the three boys and my wife. We also supplied ourselves with knives, string, a tinder-box and matches, and other useful but not cumbrous articles, hoping that, should the vessel fall to pieces, we might be able to gain the shore, partly by swimming, and partly by being borne on the waves.

Fritz, feeling more secure in the safety of his dear mother and brothers, now retired to rest. My brave wife and I remained awake, listening to each shock that threatened a change in the position of the vessel. It was indeed a sad night for us both: we passed it in prayer, and consultation respecting our future, till, with thankful hearts, we observed the first glimmer of dawn, and felt that we were safe.

In a cheerful voice I roused the boys, and led them with their mother on deck. Then for the first time they became aware that we were alone on the ship.

"O papa!" exclaimed Jack, "where are the sailors and the other passengers? How are we to continue the voyage, or get to land? Are they gone? Why did they not take us?"

"My children," I said, "our companions have left us to our fate; but we must not despair. If we exert ourselves and do all we can, God in his mercy will help us."

"Could we not make a raft, papa?" said Ernest.

"It would certainly be an excellent plan if we had the materials," I replied.

"The sea is calm enough to reach the shore by swimming," remarked Fritz.

"Swimming would be all right for you," said Ernest, "but not for us who can't swim."

"Ah, yes, I forgot. But will not those contrivances we made in the night be safe for mamma and the boys, papa?" exclaimed Fritz.

"I would rather adopt some other plan," I replied. "Suppose we search the ship, and see if any materials can be found for a raft."

We all dispersed in different directions. I proceeded at once to the provision-stores, which, to my great satisfaction, were well supplied with both food and water. My wife and youngest boy went to visit the animals; Fritz ran to the armory-room; and Ernest to the ship-carpenter's workshop. Jack, as he opened the door of the captain's cabin, got a little fright. Two large dogs sprang out, and, full of joy, bounded upon him so roughly that they threw him down, and covered him with their caresses. He

recovered himself quickly, and mounting the largest dog, rode gravely towards me, as I appeared coming up from the ship's hold.

I praised his courage, but not without advising him to be more cautious in future with strange animals.

One by one we returned to the cabin, each bringing what he considered most useful in our position.

Fritz brought powder, small-shot, bullets, and two sporting-guns. Ernest held in his hand a hatful of nails and a hammer, while from his pocket stuck out a pair of pincers and a hatchet. Even little Frank had a packet of fishing-hooks and lines, with which he seemed much pleased.

"As to myself," said my dear wife, "I have only brought good news. There are still alive on the ship a cow, a donkey, two goats, six sheep, a ram, and a sow."

"You have all done well," I said; "yet I am afraid Master Jack has brought two tremendous eaters instead of any thing useful."

"Oh, but, papa!" exclaimed Jack, "when we get on shore, the dogs will help us to hunt."

"Yes," I replied; "but first how are we to get there?"

"Can we not sail in tubs," said Jack, "as I did on the pond at home?"

"Happy thought!" I exclaimed: "let us begin at once. We will see what can be found in the hold."

My wife and the boys, excepting Jack, followed me to the hold, and we drew from the water four large empty casks. I found them exactly suited to my purpose, and set to work at once to saw them apart through the middle. We succeeded, after great exertion; and I contemplated with pride the eight half-casks or tubs as they stood side by side on the sloping deck.

"I could never dare to trust myself on the open sea in one of those things," said my wife, with a sigh.

"Do not alarm yourself too soon, dear wife," I replied; "my work is not yet finished. Wait a little,—you will find that these tubs are much better for us than a wrecked vessel which is a fixture in the rocks."

After a search I discovered a long and flexible plank, and upon this fastened my eight tubs. Two other planks I also found, and these we nailed firmly to the tubs on each side, and brought together at the ends to form the stem and stern. In reality I had made a narrow boat divided into eight compartments. All was strong and well fitted; but, alas! it was found to be so heavy that we were not able to move it an inch.

"Bring me one of the capstan-rods," I cried: "I can use it as a lever."

Fritz ran to find one. I cut off some pieces of wood from the sail-yards for rollers, and as I lifted the lower part of my boat with the iron bar, Fritz placed them underneath.

"How strange," exclaimed Ernest, "that one man can do more with that thing than we could all do with all our strength!"

"If we get safely to land, Ernest, I will explain it to you; the iron bar forms a lever, which is one of the six mechanical powers."

While saying this I was fastening a rope to the tub-raft with a strong knot; and after placing the two rollers under it, and giving it a slight push, we had the pleasure of seeing our little vessel glide from the lower deck to the sea. She descended with such rapidity that had I not

Mechanical powers: The lever, the inclined plane, the pulley, the screw, the wedge, and the wheel and axle.

taken the precaution to fasten the rope to a beam on the wreck, she would have been carried far out of our reach. Unfortunately, the boat leaned so much on one side that no one would have dared to embark in it; but I saw in a moment what it wanted. I quickly gathered up all the heavy things around me, and threw them as ballast into the tubs, and the boat immediately righted itself. I remembered reading that savage nations made use of an out-rigger to prevent their canoes oversetting, and this I determined to add to my work. I fixed two portions of a topsail yard — one over the prow, the other across the stern — in such a manner that they should not be in the way in pushing off our boat from the wreck, and forced the end of each yard into the bunghole of an empty brandy cask, to keep them steady during our progress. Nothing now remained but to secure the oars for our voyage on the morrow.

I took the precaution to desire my boys to attach the empty cans and flasks to their arms as a means of safety, should any thing happen to the ship; and advised my wife to dress herself in sailor's clothes, as more convenient for swimming, should she be thrown into the water.

She objected greatly; but I convinced her of the safety the dress would prove in case of accident, and she retired to make the change. When she re-appeared, I could not help paying her a compliment, for the dress became her admirably. My bright hopes for the morrow made her forget her boyish appearance, and she retired to her berth and slept peacefully till morning.

CHAPTER II.

A DESOLATE ISLAND.

AT daybreak we were all awake; for hope as truly as care is not a friend to sleep. As soon as we had knelt, and offered our morning prayers to God, I said to my children, —

"I hope now, that, with the aid of the Almighty, we shall soon be out of danger. And first let us provide food and water for the poor animals for several days; we may be able to return for them, if we succeed in reaching the land. And will you, my boys, collect together all that we shall require to take with us for our most pressing wants?"

My first care had been to place on board our little bark a keg of powder, three fowling-pieces, guns, pistols, and a supply of bullets, with a bullet-mould and lead to prepare more when these were gone. To my wife and each of the boys I gave a game-bag filled now with provisions, — tablets of soup, dried meat, and biscuits.

I loaded two of the tubs with an iron pot for cooking, a fishing-line and rod, a box of nails, a hammer, saw, hatchet, pincers, and a quantity of sail-cloth, with which to erect a tent. So many things were at last collected that I had to set aside those least useful for objects more precious.

When all was ready, we knelt to ask protection on our perilous voyage. I then placed the boys each in a boat,

and waited for my wife. She presently returned from the cabin, bringing a large well-filled bag, which she threw into the tub with little Frank, as I thought to form a more comfortable seat for her youngest boy.

We were about to follow the children into the boat, when all at once the cocks began to crow and the hens to cluck in such a mournful manner, that they appeared to be complaining at being left behind.

"I think we might manage to take them with us," I said. Two cocks and ten hens were accordingly placed in the tubs, and I contrived a kind of lattice-work from splinters of wood, to keep them from jumping out. The ducks, geese, and pigeons I merely set free, convinced that they would find their way to land, either through the air or by water.

At length, when we were all safely stowed away in our tubs, I cut the cable and placed myself at the helm. In the first was my wife, close behind her little Frank; the two next contained the ammunition, the sail-cloth, the tools, the provisions, and the chickens; Fritz occupied the fifth; Ernest and Jack, the sixth and seventh; and I had taken the last for myself, that I might guide the vessel by the stern oar, which served for a rudder.

Each of my elder boys took an oar, and, as well as their mother and little Frank, wore the swimming-belts I had contrived as a protection in case our strange craft should be capsized.

It was just half-tide as we quitted the vessel, and I counted upon that to carry us to land, and compensate for the weakness of our rowers.

In a few moments the two dogs which had been left on the wreck whined piteously, and sprang into the sea and swam after us. Turk was a large English mastiff, and

Floss, equally large, a Danish hound. I feared they would not be able to swim for such a distance; but, by resting now and then their fore-paws on the planks which balanced the tubs, they followed us without much trouble.

Finding we made but little progress, I took another oar, and after guiding the boat into the current of the flowing

TUB-BOAT.

tide, our navigation became less difficult, and we found ourselves approaching the shore.

Around us floated chests, casks, and bales of goods—the *débris* of the ill-fated ship. Fritz and I hooked some of them with our oars, and fastened them to our raft.

As we drew nearer, the land lost much of its wild and sterile aspect, and Fritz, who has the eye of a falcon,

declared that he could distinguish trees, and amongst them the palm and cocoanut.

"Oh!" cried Ernest, who was fond of good things, "how nice it will be to have cocoanuts! they are larger and better than the nuts of Europe."

A difficulty now arose as to the most convenient point on the coast for us to land, and I was beginning to regret that I had forgotten to bring the telescope from the captain's cabin, when Jack drew from his pocket a smaller one, and offered it to me with delight at being able to gratify my wish.

I presently perceived a narrow bay, towards which our ducks and geese were rapidly swimming in advance of us, as if to lead the way.

And as I guided our boat towards the entrance, I found the water only sufficiently deep to float it; and we arrived at last, after some little trouble, at a spot where it was so shallow that the shore was on a level with the top of our tubs.

We sprang out joyfully from the boat. The dogs, who had arrived as soon as ourselves, bounded with joy, and barked around us in the wildest manner. The geese and ducks quacked to welcome us. To this and the barking of the dogs were added the cries of flamingoes, who flew away as we appeared, mingled with the screams of penguins perched on the rocks.

We were safe, and our first act was to fall upon our knees and thank God for having mercifully preserved us in the hour of danger, and pray to him to continue to grant us his protection.

We commenced unloading the boat, and, after choosing a suitable spot, prepared to erect a tent as a place of shelter for the night. One of the poles, which had served

to balance the boat, was firmly fixed in the ground, and the end of another placed upon the top of it; the opposite end being fixed in a crevice of the rock.

Over this framework we threw our sail-cloth, stretching it out as far as possible on all sides, and then fastening it to the ground with a number of stakes.

For greater security our chests and other heavy articles were placed around the cloth to keep out the wind; and Fritz attached hooks to the edges in front, that we might draw them together during the night. Then I sent the children to gather as much moss and grass as they could find, and lay it in the sun to dry, that we might have something softer than the hard ground to sleep on at night.

While they were thus engaged, I piled up a number of large stones at some distance from the tent, to form a fireplace, on the borders of the little creek by which we had reached the land. Branches of trees and dried wood I found readily, and, gathering armfuls, placed them on my stone hearth; and presently a fire — that true friend of man — rose sparkling and flaming towards the sky.

Upon this I placed our iron pot full of water, and into it my wife threw one of the tablets, for she intended us to have soup for dinner. Little Frank took the portable soup for glue, and could not conceive how mamma could make soup, as we had no meat, and there were no butchers' shops here.

Meanwhile Fritz loaded his gun and took his way along the banks of the stream. Ernest turned towards the sea, while Jack wandered among the rocks to search for shells. I employed myself in drawing from the water the two casks which we had secured in our transit from the ship to the shore.

I discovered, however, that, while the water at the spot on which we landed was convenient for unloading the boat, it had not depth enough to float it when heavily laden. While I stood considering what was best to be done, I heard Jack cry out as if in terror. Seizing a hatchet, I ran in the direction of his voice, and saw him in the water up to his knees, and an enormous lobster or crab holding him by the leg in one of its claws, while Jack tried in vain to get rid of his enemy.

I jumped into the water, and, disabling the crustaceous animal with my hatchet, brought him ashore, to Jack's great delight.

He caught the creature in both his hands; but hardly had he touched it, when it struck him such a violent blow with its tail that he threw it on the ground and began to cry.

I terribly offended him by laughing outright, and in his anger he took up a stone, and stunned the fallen foe by a blow on the head.

"It is not generous to strike a vanquished foe," I exclaimed. "You should have approached the creature more cautiously."

Finding the lobster helpless, Jack ran with it to his mother, exclaiming,—

"See, mamma! Ernest! Frank! look, I've caught a lobster — such a large one! Where is Fritz?"

Every one congratulated him on his success; and Ernest suggested that the creature should be at once cooked for dinner, and that it would make delicious soup. But his mother decided that it should be set aside till we had more need of it.

As will be seen in the story, my four boys possessed very different dispositions. Fritz, the eldest, was a manly

intelligent boy of fourteen, quick tempered, but generous to a fault. Ernest, aged twelve, was more gentle and refined than his elder brother, but with very little energy, and a tendency to indolence and self-indulgence, which rendered him far less useful than even his high-spirited younger brother Jack, a boy of ten. Little Frank, only six, was the youngest, and rather childish, as the youngest of a family is apt to be.

The reader will see, as the story proceeds, how the position into which we were thrown tended to develop traits of character in these four boys.

Jack's pride in the capture of the lobster made him forget his alarm and cowardice.

"You see this monster!" he exclaimed—"he caught me by the leg with his terrible claws; and I believe he would have torn it, but for my thick sailor's trousers. However, I soon settled him."

"Little boaster!" I said to him, "you would have been more likely settled by the lobster, had I not run to your assistance."

"I think I have seen," cried Ernest, "some animals quite as good to eat as Jack's lobster; but I did not care to get any, because I should have had to wade through the water."

"What an excuse!" exclaimed Jack. "Afraid of getting wet!—and they were only mussels, I dare say, and not fit to eat."

"In my opinion they are oysters," replied Ernest, "and they are not at any great depth in the water."

"And pray, why did you not bring us some for dinner? In our present position every sort of wholesome food is acceptable. And to fear getting wet is absurd! You see that the sun has dried my clothes and Jack's already."

"I forgot that, papa," replied Ernest, "or I could have brought salt as well. I saw a great quantity in the crevices of the rocks, left there by the sea, I suppose."

"Of course, my son. Go and fetch some, unless you would like to eat your soup without it."

In a short time he returned with what was evidently common salt, but so mixed with sand that I should have thrown it away, had not my wife prevented me.

"I can improve it," she said, "by dissolving it in fresh water, and straining it through a piece of linen."

"Why could we not use sea-water?" asked Jack.

"Because it would be too bitter," replied Ernest. "The bitter taste is very strong when sea-water is boiled."

My wife now informed us that the soup was ready; but Fritz had not returned. Where could he be? While we waited, she remarked, —

"How are we to eat the soup, now that it is prepared? We have neither spoons nor cups. We are in the same predicament as the fox in the fable, when the stork offered him his breakfast in a jug with a long narrow neck."

We all laughed heartly, especially when Ernest said, —

"If we only had cocoanut-shells divided in two, they would make splendid cups."

"No doubt," I replied: "why don't you wish we had a dozen silver spoons? Wishing is useless: can you not invent something?"

"Those shells I saw would serve us for spoons capitally," said Ernest.

"A bright idea, my boy. Oyster-shells are better than nothing: so run, boys, and get as many as you can."

Away started Jack. Ernest followed slowly, and when he reached the spot, there was Jack up to his knees in

the water. As he stood still, dreading to wet his feet, Jack detached the oysters, and threw them to his brother.

"You can gather them up and help me carry them," he said, "if you are so afraid of the water."

Ernest gladly assented, and they quickly obtained a sufficient number. As they returned, Fritz also re-appeared. He came forward with one hand behind his back, affecting a dispirited air.

"Have you found nothing?" I asked.

"Nothing at all," he answered. But his brothers, who crowded round him, shouted, "Did you kill it? Oh, do show it to us!"

Fritz, then, with a self-satisfied air, placed before me the first result of his hunting exploits.

"You have succeeded, no doubt, Fritz," I said gravely; "but I cannot allow you to utter falsehoods, even in joke or to surprise us. The habit of untruthfulness in play easily leads to speaking falsely on serious subjects."

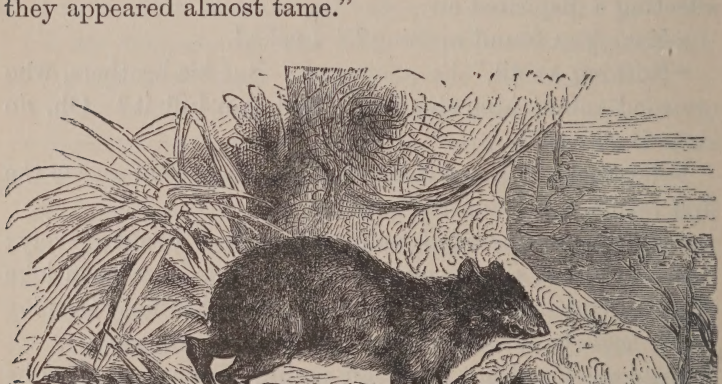
Fritz promised not to offend again. Then he told us he had wandered to the other side of the creek, and found the vegetation very different,—green grass, pleasant meadows, and such magnificent trees to shade us from the heat.

"And, papa," he added, "there are chests and boxes and spars floating about from the wreck. Can we not go and bring them? If the animals were here that we left on board, it would be easy to find food for them; and how useful they would be, especially the cow, to supply us with milk! Don't let us stay in this barren place."

"Patience, patience!" I said. "One thing at a time. To-morrow we will try what can be done. But tell me, did you see any thing of our fellow-passengers?"

"No, papa; not a single trace on sea or land. But, papa, I think this place is an island; and," he added

quickly, "there are pigs here, for I have shot one. I don't think it exactly resembles the pigs in Europe, for its paws are more like those of a hare. I saw several in the grass. They had no fear of me, so I ventured quite close, and saw them sitting on their hind-legs, and feeding themselves like squirrels. If I had not been afraid they would all escape from me, I should have tried to catch one alive, for they appeared almost tame."



AGOUTI.

Ernest, in spite of his indolent habits, had been a great reader, and was perhaps the most intellectual of my boys. He had been examining the dead animal carefully while his brother talked.

"This is not a pig at all, Fritz," he said: "it has hair like silk, and four large incisor teeth in front. I believe it is an animal I've read about in my natural history, called an agouti."

"Indeed!" said Fritz: I believe it's a young pig.

"Gently, gently," I cried; "don't be so hasty. Ernest, I believe, is right. I have never seen the agouti; but the appearance of this animal corresponds entirely with the descriptions I have read, as well as the pictures."

While we were discussing this question, Jack was trying to open an oyster with his knife, but without success.

I showed him that, if laid upon hot coals, they opened of themselves.

"See, my children," I said; "this is considered a great delicacy. Let us taste it."

Fritz and Jack, imitating my example, declared them very bad; and Ernest and Francis agreed with them. No one cared to eat any more: so we threw away all but the shells, and used them as spoons.

While we were making a good meal, the dogs, which thought they could not do better than follow our example, discovered Fritz's agouti, and began to attack it. Perceiving this, Fritz was furious, and the first thing he could lay hold of being his gun, he struck them with it so violently as to break it. Then, when they made their escape, he threw stones after them as long as he thought he could reach them.

My voice recalled him to himself, and, when his rage calmed down, I talked seriously to him about this hasty temper, which appeared to become worse instead of better, as he grew older. He looked very much ashamed, and owned he was wrong, and presently I observed him trying to make friends with the dogs.

The sun was setting as we finished our repast. The fowls and ducks gathered round us, and my wife got them some corn from the bag I had seen her throw into the tub Francis had occupied. I praised her forethought, but suggested that the birds be fed on biscuit-crumbs, and that

the corn be kept for sowing. The pigeons went to roost in the crevices of the rocks, and the fowls on the top of the tent, while the ducks sought shelter for the night among the rushes at the mouth of the stream. We also made preparations for repose. We loaded our arms, and placed them so as to be at hand in case of any alarm, and, having offered up our evening prayer, retired into the tent. To the great surprise of the children, it was almost immediately dark, from which I guessed we were somewhere near the equator, or at least within the tropics.

I looked out once more to make sure that all was right, and then closed the entrance to our tent. It was a chill fresh night, and the cold made us draw close together. The children were soon asleep. My wife and I had arranged that I should watch till midnight, and that she should then replace me; but insensibly sleep crept over me, and God alone watched over us during the first night we passed in exile.

CHAPTER III.

A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

AT early dawn we were aroused by the crowing of the cocks, and my wife and I consulted together on the best plan to adopt in our proceedings during the day. She agreed with me that not only was it necessary to search for some trace of our fellow-passengers, but also to explore the country, before we decided upon our future resting-place. She understood readily that it would be impossible for the whole family to venture on such an expedition, and proposed, therefore, that I should take Fritz, as he was the strongest and the most useful, leaving the younger boys under her care. I was thankful to find her reconciled to this arrangement, and begged her to prepare breakfast while I aroused the boys.

"We have not much left for breakfast," she said, "only the remains of the soup."

"But where is Jack's lobster?" I cried, "what has he done with it?"

"Will you not ask him," she replied, "while I light a fire, and put the water on to boil?"

The boys were soon awake, and I inquired of Jack what had become of the lobster.

He ran at once to bring it from a crevice in the rock, where he had hidden it for safety.

"I was determined the dogs should not devour it, as they did the agouti, papa," he said.

"You take care of what belongs to yourself, my boy," I said, "I hope you will also care for the wants of others. I think you ought to give up to Fritz the claws of the lobster which I promised you, to provide him with a dinner on his journey to-day."

"A journey, a journey!" they all cried; "are we going?" and began to jump and dance round me like young kids.

"This time it is impossible," I said; "we know not what dangers we may meet. Fritz and I have strength to struggle against them, and to bear the fatigue of a long journey. You must stay here with your mother, in safety. We shall take Turk with us, and leave Floss to guard you."

When I desired Fritz to take his gun and an axe, with a game-bag, he blushed, and asked my permission to choose another instead of his own.

To this I readily agreed, for I felt pleased to see that he remembered his outburst of temper with shame.

I told him to place two small pistols in his belt, while I loaded the game-bag with powder and shot, some biscuits, and a bottle of water.

By this time breakfast was ready: it consisted of the lobster and some biscuits.

"We ought to start soon, papa," he said, "before the heat of the day comes on."

"Quite right, my boy," I replied; "but we have forgotten something of great importance."

"What is it?" he asked, "to say farewell to mamma and the boys?"

"I know," said Ernest, — "we have not had morning prayers yet."

"Yes, my boy. We forget God too easily while thinking

of the requirements of this life; and yet we never wanted his succor and protection more surely than now."

Before Fritz and I started, I called the younger boys round their mother, and enjoined them to obey her implicitly in every thing. I reminded her also to be sure to keep a loaded gun close at hand, and not to lose sight of our tub-boat, as in case of alarm it would prove a place of refuge.

At last we separated, and I heard the sorrowful adieus of those we left behind till we reached the banks of the stream which we intended to cross.

The ground rose abruptly, and we were obliged to follow the current for a time, to find a spot at which to cross and get farther inland.

After walking a long distance, the stream grew narrower, and we contrived to leap from stone to stone, and reach the opposite bank in safety.

We had not advanced a hundred steps, when we heard a rustling in the grass behind us. I stopped, and saw Fritz fearlessly raise his gun, and wait calmly for the unknown enemy, which proved to be no other than our dog Turk. We had forgotten to call him, and he had been sent after us. I overwhelmed the animal with caresses, and praised Fritz for his steadiness and caution, for, had he fired through fear, he might have killed the dog.

"You see, my son," I said, "how fatal our passions are, if not under control. Yesterday through anger, and to-day from fear, you might have destroyed our best and most useful friends."

While conversing thus we reached the seashore. Here we stood still for a while, looking in every direction across the ocean, in the hope of discovering the boats containing our fellow-passengers; but not even in the sand could we find any trace of the footsteps of man.

"Why should we trouble ourselves about those who forsook us so cruelly?" asked Fritz.

"For several reasons, my boy," I replied; "and first, because we ought always to return good for evil. If they could not be useful to us, we might help them greatly, for they carried nothing away from the wreck."

We continued our walk inland, and at the end of two hours arrived at the entrance of a wood. Here we halted, and seated ourselves in the cool shade by a rippling brook.

Fritz fancied he saw an ape among the foliage; and the uneasiness of Turk, who barked furiously, confirmed him in his idea. He rose to assure himself that he was right, and while looking up, and regardless of his steps, struck his foot violently against something round which had fallen in his path.

He picked it up, and, bringing it to me, said, "What is this, papa? I think it must be the nest of some bird." I smiled as I replied, "It is a nut, my boy, a cocoanut, too."

"Some birds make round nests, I know," he persisted.

"Certainly they do; but that is no reason that this should be a nest. Do you not remember that the cocoanut has two shells: the outer one thin, and covered with fibres; and the inner one hard, and containing a milky fluid? Break it, Fritz, and you will find the inner nut or kernel inside."

He obeyed; but the nut was evidently an old one, for the inside of the kernel was quite decayed, and unfit to eat. I proposed that we should go farther into the wood, where no doubt grew other cocoanut-trees, and perhaps meet with a fresher one.

A little farther on, the wood became so thick that we were obliged to cut our way through with the hatchet. At last we saw, scattered here and there, solitary trees of a peculiar species, which attracted the notice of Fritz.

His keen eyes espied two of such a singular appearance that he stopped to examine them, and then cried, "Papa, look at those trees with large bulbs growing on the trunks!"

I drew nearer, and found, to my great satisfaction, a group of calabash-trees, loaded with fruit.

"What can those excrescences be?" he asked.

"We will soon discover the secret," I replied. "Gather one of them, and let us examine the interior."

Immediately he placed in my hands a common gourd, with a shell which seemed to me unusually soft.

"This gourd, Fritz," I said, "has in general a hard dry shell, of which cups, plates, and bottles can be made. The flexible stem of the plant on which it grows winds itself about the trunks and boughs of large and strong trees, from which the gourd is suspended. Can you think for what reason?"

"Yes," replied Fritz: "without this support, the weight of the gourd would break the branches of the plant on which it grows."

"You have judged rightly," I replied; "and it will prove to you how wisely God has arranged all things."

After a little talk about the use of the gourd, I showed him how to form the shell into bottles, spoons, and other articles; and, as each appeared, he expressed his joy at the thought of the useful things he should be able to take to his mother.

We then set about making dishes and plates. I showed him a better way of dividing the gourd than with a knife. I tied a string tightly round the nut, struck it with the handle of my knife till an incision was made, then tightened it till the nut was separated into two equally-sized bowls. He had spoiled his own by cutting it irregularly

with his knife. We marked the spot, that we might find it again on our road home.

After walking for nearly four hours, we arrived at a kind of peninsula, which stretched far out into the sea, and terminated in a small but steep hill. Up this we climbed with some difficulty; but, when we reached the top, the calm ocean stretched before us, sparkling in the sunlight. To our left appeared a small bay; while, almost to the water's edge, the rich verdure of the land displayed treasures unknown in the continent of Europe.

After gazing with delight on this fertile spot, we turned towards the sea, and examined with our glass its vast expanse; but no trace of our companions could be discovered. The same result followed our search through the glass over the inland prospect. No habitations of man, nor signs of his presence, could be discovered.

The reflection that we were alone saddened me, and, after some minutes of silence, I said, —

"Fritz, God has prepared for us another destiny than the one we anticipated. He has chosen for us the life of colonists. We will try to be as happy as possible in our lonely island."

"We boys will soon grow strong enough to help you, papa, and God will preserve us."

"True, my son. I am glad to hear you say this: it gives me courage. However, we must not remain longer in this burning sun. Let us find a shady spot in which we may rest while we take some refreshment."

As we descended the hill, we perceived at a little distance a grove of palm-trees; but to reach it we had to cross a large space thickly grown with tall reeds.

We advanced cautiously, for at every step we feared that we should tread upon venomous snakes. I sent

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Turk on before, and, as a further means of defence, cut from the reeds, which were tall and thick, one of the strongest I could find, to carry in my hand.

Soon, to my astonishment, a glutinous liquid ran between my fingers. I touched it with my lips, and its sweet taste proved at once that we had discovered a wild overgrowth of sugar-canes.

I told Fritz, who was a little in advance of me, to cut a reed as a protection, but said nothing of the sugar.

He obeyed at once, seized the cane, and commenced brandishing it over his head, and striking the reeds right and left to frighten away serpents. In so doing he broke it, and set free an abundance of the juice, which streamed upon his hands. Without a word he tasted it, and, jumping for joy, cried, —

"Papa! O papa! it is the sugar-cane! Only taste it!"

He broke his reed in several places, and sucked the juice eagerly.

"I should like," he said, "to take some of these to my mother and brothers, as well as a few to refresh ourselves on the way." I advised him not to take too many, for we had still a long way to go; but he cut a dozen of the largest, and, stripping them of their leaves, carried them under his arm. We had scarcely entered the palm-wood when a troop of monkeys, startled by our footsteps and Turk's barking, rushed up the trees, where they sat grinning and chattering. Fritz, without a moment's reflection, threw down his bundle of canes, and seized his gun, but I stopped him.

"Why would you kill the animals?"

"Monkeys," he said, "are wicked, silly animals. Just see how they are showing their teeth at us!"

"Yes; but they are enraged, and not without reason.

We have intruded upon them: do not let us unnecessarily kill any creature." I picked up some stones and threw them, but not high enough to reach the monkeys. Their rage at this increased to fury, and presently they plucked and poured down upon us a perfect hail of cocoanuts. We had to save ourselves as we best could, in the shelter of the trees or by jumping aside to avoid them.

Fritz laughed heartily, and, when the cocoanut shower ceased, with eager satisfaction gathered as many as he could carry.

We sought for a spot in which to enjoy our harvest of nuts, the shells of which we broke with a hatchet; and, by making a hole with a knife at one end of the kernel and another on the opposite side, we were able to suck the milk. It was not exactly to our taste, but, after breaking the inner shell, we found a white part inside, which, being easily scraped off with the new spoons, proved very agreeable eating. The juice from the sugar-canes completed our delicious feast.

The remains of the crab were given to Turk, with a few biscuit, and as he did not appear satisfied, we threw him some pieces of the sugar-cane and cocoanuts, which he pounced upon eagerly, and crunched between his teeth till not a morsel remained.

After we had finished our repast, I selected a few of the cocoanuts, the stalks of which still adhered, and tied them together to enable me to carry them more easily. Fritz took up his bundle of sugar-canes, and we started on our homeward walk.

The milky liquid is only found in the cocoanut while it is unripe. As the nut ripens, the milk congeals, and gradually grows firm and white. When over-ripe, this white substance is hard, and very unwholesome; but, in its most perfect state, this lining of the cocoanut-shell is firm, soft, and sweet.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOMEWARD JOURNEY.

I SOON discovered that Fritz found the weight of his canes considerably more than he expected: he shifted them from shoulder to shoulder, then for a while carried them under his arm, and finally stopped short with a sigh. "I had no idea," he said, "that a few reeds would be so heavy."

"Never mind, my boy," I said, "patience and courage! Do you not remember the story of Æsop and his bread-basket — how heavy he found it when he started, and how light at the end of his journey? Let us each take a fresh staff, and then fasten the bundle crosswise on your gun."

As we went along, I often tasted my cane; and Fritz, trying to imitate me, found he could not extract any juice.

"Reflect a little," I said, "and I am sure you will find the reason."

It soon occurred to him that he must make an opening above the first knot of the cane to let in the air. This done, he found no difficulty in refreshing himself as much as he wished with this delicious beverage. He drew my attention, however, to the fact that, if we continued to use them as we were doing, very few of the canes would reach the tent. "Do not let that trouble you," I said,

Æsop: an ancient Greek writer; known to us through a collection of fables which bear his name.

"for the heat of the sun will most likely turn the sweet juice sour, after the canes have been cut and exposed to it."

"At any rate," replied Fritz, "they will taste the cocoa-milk, for I have taken some in my tin flask."

"Don't be too sure, Fritz. You may find a bottle full of vinegar instead of cocoanut-milk when we reach home. When taken out of its natural receptacle, it quickly spoils."

"Shall we try one now?" he asked.

A bottle was taken from the bag; and, as we endeavored to force the cork, the contents flew into the air, foaming like champagne.

We tasted it, and found it very delicious. Fritz was so delighted with it, that I warned him to be moderate, lest it should go to his head. Much refreshed, we walked on more briskly, and soon returned to the place where we had left our calabash-dishes.

We found them dry, and so well preserved that they could easily be carried in the game-bag.

Scarcely had we entered the wood when Turk rushed past us, barking furiously at a group of monkeys, who were enjoying their gambols in perfect ignorance of our approach.

Alarmed at the barking of the dog, they sprang into the trees out of his way — all but a female monkey, who carried a little one on her back, and could not escape.

Before we reached him, Turk had seized the poor animal, and although Fritz, throwing off his hat and the sugar-canes, had rushed to the rescue, he arrived too late to save her.

Fritz tried to drive the dog away, but I advised him to desist. The unsatisfied hunger of Turk had rendered him

savage, and therefore dangerous. The baby monkey had fallen on the grass when Turk seized its mother, and was looking at the dog, and making all sorts of grimaces. The instant the little one caught sight of Fritz, he jumped with one spring upon his back, and clung firmly to his hair. Neither cries nor blows on the poor little creature could release Fritz of his burden; and, seeing there was no danger, the annoyance to Fritz and the grimaces of the little monkey rendered it impossible for me to help laughing heartily.

I hastened, however, to remove the unwelcome guest, and succeeded, by caresses and gentleness, in relieving Fritz. The monkey was not much larger than a kitten, and evidently incapable of providing for itself. I took it in my arms as I would an infant.

"The little creature has lost its mother, and has taken you for its adopted father, Fritz," I said, joking him. "I wonder what resemblance he finds in you to his own family."

"The little rogue!" laughed Fritz. "I suppose he discovered that I am good-natured, and kind to animals: so he placed himself under my protection. But he has pulled my hair terribly."

"Father," said Fritz, "do let me keep it. We can feed it with cocoanut-milk; or, if we get the cow and the goat from the ship, there will be milk to spare. And perhaps the instinct of this little creature may help us to discover if the fruits and vegetables we find are fit for food."

I consented, on condition that he taught it to be obedient; and we continued our walk. Turk soon overtook us. The little monkey seemed uneasy at the sight of him, and crept into Fritz's bosom, much to his inconvenience. But a thought struck him: he tied the monkey with a

cord to Turk's back, leading the dog by another cord, and though he was very rebellious at first, our threats and caresses at last induced him to submit to his burden. We proceeded slowly, and I could not help anticipating the mirth of my little ones when they saw us approach like a pair of showmen.

Almost before we were aware, we drew near to the stream which we had crossed at the falls in the morning. Floss scented us from afar, and barked loudly. Turk barked in reply with all his might, and so alarmed his little cavalier, that he sprang from the dog's back to the shoulders of Fritz, and nothing could induce him to descend. Turk, finding himself free, set off to reconnoitre the country, and crossed the river by swimming.

The dear ones soon appeared, one after the other, on the opposite bank, to welcome our approach, and, full of joy and affection, our happy party was once more united.

The children gave themselves scarcely time to examine what we had brought, before they began shouting, "Oh, a monkey! Fritz, where did you find it? Oh, what a pretty little creature! I wish I knew what it could eat. But what are those sticks for? And look at those great things papa is carrying!"

When the first transports were over, I said,—

"I am overjoyed to see you all. We have returned in safety, thank God, and have brought you all sorts of good things; but we have not succeeded in finding any trace of our fellow-travellers, nor, indeed, any signs of inhabitants."

"Let us praise God for uniting us once more," said my wife: "we can still be happy in our own society and love. Let us now relieve you of your burdens."

Jack immediately took my gun, Ernest the cocoanuts,

Frank the spoons and plates, and my wife the game-bag. Fritz untied the sugar-canes from his gun, and asked Ernest to carry them, while he again placed the little monkey on Turk's back.

Ernest could not refuse; but he appeared so laden, that his mother, out of pity, took the nuts.

"Ah," said Fritz, "if Ernest only knew what he had given up, he would soon ask for them again. — They are the dear nuts that you are so fond of, Ernest."

"Cocoanuts!" he exclaimed. "Ah, mamma, let me have them again. I can carry them, gun and all."

"No, no, my child! I shall hear you complaining presently how the load fatigues you."

"I can throw away these sticks then, and carry the gun in my hand."

"Throw away those sticks!" cried Fritz. "Why, they are sugar-canes! Come, and I will show you how to get at the sugar."

"Sugar-canes, sugar-canes!" was the general cry as the boys clustered around Fritz.

And so one thing after another was described and explained; yet, after all, nothing gave more complete satisfaction than the cups, plates, and spoons made of the gourds from the calabash-tree.

When we reached the tent, I found a wonderful repast preparing for us at the cooking-place.

Upon a large fire on the stone hearth stood the iron pot full of soup. From a piece of wood, which rested at each end on two other pieces fixed in the ground, hung a goose roasting, the fat falling into dried oyster-shells underneath.

Several kinds of fish were cooking on the hot stones; and, best of all, there stood at a little distance one of the

chests I had saved from the wreck. My wife and the boys had contrived to drag it up from the river-side and open it; and I could see that it contained a large number of Dutch cheeses wrapped in thin sheets of lead.

"It appears to me, my dear children, that you have not been idle during our absence; yet was it not a pity to kill one of our geese?"

"Do not be uneasy," said my wife; "that is a wild bird that Ernest killed."

"I believe it is a penguin, papa," said Ernest; "and I call it a booby because it let me kill it so easily with a stick."

"What sort of feet and beak has this bird?" I asked.

"It has the feet of aquatic birds," replied Ernest, "for all the four toes are united by a membrane. The beak is long, slender, and strong, a little curved at the end, and exactly like the description of a penguin which I read in my natural history at home."

"I do not doubt you are right, my boy; and it proves how much may be learned by reading attentively."

"Come, now," said his mother, "do you not observe how the eyes of Ernest are fixed on the cocoanuts? Let him have the pleasure of tasting them."

"Willingly," I replied; "but Fritz must show him how to obtain the milk by suction; and the monkey must not be forgotten."

"But he won't take any thing, papa," said Jack. "I have tried him with all I can think of."

"We must try him with the milk of the cocoanut," I said. "No doubt he will drink that."

My wife summoned us to supper, and we seated ourselves on the ground, with the spoons, basins, and plates made from the calabash-tree. I broke the outer cover-

ing of two cocoanuts, and they quite enjoyed the white lining of the inner shell, after I had extracted the milk.

Some of this was saved for the monkey; and the boys, after dipping the corners of their handkerchiefs in it, were delighted to find that the little creature would suck them eagerly.

I promised to show the boys how to make spoons and cups from the cocoanut-shells; and the mother was delighted to find she need not again serve out the soup in oyster-shells. While we were enjoying the fish, which were very good, Fritz asked if his mother would not like to taste the cocoa-nut champagne.

"Taste it first yourself, Fritz," I said.

"Ho!" he exclaimed presently, with a wry face, "it is vinegar!"

"As I expected, my boy; but, never mind, vinegar is very good with fish;" and the rest followed my example as I poured some into my gourd basin.

Then, while we ate for dessert cheese, cocoanuts, and sugarcane-juice, each related his exploits, and explained how the fish, the penguin, the cocoanuts, the sugar-canes, and so on, were found.

By the time we had finished, it was necessary to prepare our beds for the night. My wife and the boys had provided a large quantity of dry moss and grass to spread on the floor of our tent, and we expected, in consequence, to find our beds softer than on the preceding night.

The poultry were already gone to roost on the ridge of the tent, the geese and ducks had betaken themselves to their night-quarters, and, after offering our evening prayer, we entered the tent. The baby ape entered with us, and Fritz and Jack took the little motherless creature to sleep between them, to protect him from the cold.

We had not been asleep long, when I was aroused by the restless movements of the fowls and the barking and yelping of the dogs. Seizing my gun, I rushed out quickly, followed by my wife and Fritz, who were also armed.

In amazement I perceived, by the light of the moon, that a great battle was going on at a little distance, between a number of jackals and our brave dogs. Already the dogs had settled three or four of their assailants; and those who remained surrounded them, hoping to take them at a disadvantage; but the two courageous animals kept them at bay.

Fritz and I fired together and killed two; and the others, frightened by the report of the guns, made off. Fritz dragged the one he had shot into the tent, to show in the morning to his brothers, whom neither the firing of the guns nor the barking of the dogs had wakened. We lay down once more to sleep, and were not disturbed again that night.

CHAPTER V.

A SUCCESSFUL VOYAGE.

So many duties pressed upon me, that my first thoughts on waking made me anxious. I at once began to consult my wife, and to seek her advice.

"What shall I undertake first to-day, dear wife?" I said. "A voyage to the ship is absolutely necessary, if we wish to save the animals from starving; and there are so many things on the wreck that would be useful to us. On the other hand, we have much to do here, and, above all, to construct a new dwelling-place."

"Do not be uneasy, dear husband," she replied: "all will be accomplished in time. Most certainly a voyage to the wreck is first necessary, for, should a storm arise, every thing on board would be lost."

It was agreed that the three youngest children should remain with my wife, and that Fritz should accompany me.

I arose, and woke my children for the important duties of the day. Fritz jumped up first and ran for his jackal, which had stiffened in the cold of the night. He placed it on its four legs at the entrance of the tent, to surprise his brothers; but no sooner did the dogs see it erect than they flew at it, and would have torn it to pieces, if he had not soothed them and called them off. Their barking, however, roused the boys, who rushed out to see the cause. Jack issued first with the monkey on his shoulder; but no

sooner did the little creature see the jackal than he sprang into the tent and hid himself among the moss, till only the tip of his nose was visible. All were astonished to see this large, yellow animal. Francis thought it was a wolf; Jack said it was only a dead dog; and Ernest, in a pompous tone, pronounced it a golden fox.

Fritz laughed at the learned professor, who knew the agouti immediately, and now called a jackal a golden fox.

"Come, boys," said I, "no more of this: you are none of you very far wrong, for the jackal partakes of the nature of all three, — dog, wolf, and fox."

My words produced peace; and then eager inquiries were made about what had occurred in the night; and the boys listened with great interest to our account of the battle between the dogs and the jackals. We assembled once more for our morning prayer, and asked God to guide and protect us during the day.

At breakfast we were obliged to content ourselves with biscuit, which were so hard that our teeth could scarcely break them. In this extremity, Fritz asked for cheese, and went behind the tent to procure some from the cask. Ernest followed, and presently returning with a bright face, exclaimed, —

"O papa, if we could only open that other cask!"

"What cask? and why?"

"Well, there is a large cask just outside, and some grease has run through a little crack. I am sure it looks exactly like butter."

"If what you say is true, my boy," I exclaimed, "you shall have the first slice of bread and butter as a reward for your discovery."

We all sallied out to examine this wonderful cask, and very quickly proved that the boy was right. In a few

minutes we obtained a cocoanut-cup full of beautiful, salt butter. We softened the biscuit easily now by covering them with butter, and holding them to the fire; so that, after all, we had a delicious breakfast. During our meal the dogs lay quietly by our side, and did not seem at all anxious for their share of our breakfast. I examined the poor animals, and found that they had been bitten and wounded in several places, especially about the neck. My wife proposed to rub the places with butter, as a salve. I spoke of the salt, but she quickly overcame that difficulty by washing the butter; then, giving it to Jack, she desired him to take the dogs under his care, and carefully anoint their wounds with it.

The animals commenced licking their wounds, and in a few days were completely healed. Ernest remarked that they ought to have spiked collars, to defend them from any wild beasts they might encounter.

"I will make them collars," said Jack, who never hesitated at any thing. I was glad to employ his inventive powers, and requesting my children not to leave their mother during our absence, but to pray to God to bless our undertaking, we began our preparations for the voyage.

While Fritz made ready the boat, I erected a signal-post, with a piece of sail-cloth for a flag, to float as long as all was going on well. But, if we were wanted, they were to lower the flag, and fire a gun three times, when we would immediately return; for I had informed my dear wife it might be necessary for us to remain on board all night, and she consented to the plan on my promising to pass the night in our tubs instead of the vessel. Relying on the ship's provisions, we took nothing but our guns and ammunition. Fritz, however, took the monkey, that he might give it some milk from the cow.

We took a tender leave of each other, and embarked. When we had rowed into the middle of the bay, I perceived a strong current formed by the water of the river, which I was glad to take advantage of to spare our labor. It carried us three parts of our voyage, and we rowed the remainder, and, entering the opening in the vessel, secured our boat firmly and went on board.

The first care of Fritz was to feed the animals, which were on deck and which all saluted us after their fashion, rejoiced to see their friends again, as well as to have their wants supplied. We put the young monkey to a goat, which, to our infinite amusement, he sucked with extraordinary grimaces. We then took some refreshment ourselves; and Fritz proposed that we should begin by adding a sail to our boat. He said the current which helped us to the vessel could not carry us back; but the wind, which made our rowing so fatiguing, would be of great service if we had a sail.

I thanked my counsellor for his good advice, and we immediately set to the task. I selected a strong pole for a mast, and a triangular sail, which was fixed to a yard. We made a hole in a plank to receive the mast, secured the plank on our fourth tub, forming a deck, and then, by aid of a block used to hoist and lower the sails, raised our mast. Finally, two ropes, fastened by one end to the yard and by the other to each extremity of the boat, enabled us to direct the sail at pleasure. Fritz next ornamented the top of the mast with a little red streamer. He gave our boat the name of the "Deliverance"; and, to complete its equipment, I contrived a rudder, so that I could direct the boat from either end.

After signalling to our friends that we should not return that night, we spent the rest of the day in empty-

ing the tubs of the stones we had used as ballast, and replacing them with useful things, — powder and shot, nails and tools of all kinds, pieces of cloth, and, above all, knives, forks, spoons, and kitchen utensils, including a roasting-jack. In the captain's cabin we found some services of silver, pewter plates and dishes, and a small chest filled with choice wines. All these we took, as well as a chest of eatables, intended for the officers' table, portable soup, Westphalian hams, Bologna sausages, etc., also some bags of maize, wheat, and other seeds, and some potatoes. We collected all the implements of husbandry we could spare room for, and, at the request of Fritz, some hammocks and blankets, two or three handsome guns, and an armful of sabres, swords, and hunting-knives. Lastly, I embarked a barrel of sulphur, all the cord and string I could lay hands on, and a large roll of sail-cloth. Our tubs were loaded to the edge; there was barely room left for us to sit; and it would have been dangerous to attempt our return if the sea had not been so calm.

We exchanged signals to announce security on sea and land, and, after prayers for the dear islanders, sought our tubs, not the most luxurious of dormitories, but safer than the ship. Fritz slept soundly; but I, thinking of the jackals, could not close my eyes. I was, however, thankful for the protection they had in the dogs.

As soon as day broke, I mounted on deck to look through the telescope. I saw my wife looking towards us, and the flag which denoted their safety floating in the breeze. Satisfied on this important point, we enjoyed our breakfast of biscuit, ham, and wine, and turned our thoughts to the means of saving our cattle. Even if we could contrive a raft, we could never get all the animals

to remain still on it. We might venture the huge sow in the water; but the rest of the animals would not be able to swim to shore. At last Fritz suggested the swimming apparatus, and we passed two hours in constructing them. For the cow and ass it was necessary to have an empty cask on each side, well bound in strong sail-cloth, fastened by leather thongs over the back and under each animal. For the rest, we merely tied a piece of cork under their bodies, the sow only being unruly and giving us much trouble; and fastened a cord to the horns or neck of each animal, with a slip of wood at the end for a convenient handle. Luckily, the waves had broken away a part of the ship, and left the opening wide enough for the passage of our troop. And now came the difficulty of launching our living freight into the sea.

We led them to the lower part of the ship, and made the first experiment by giving the donkey a push into the water. He fell with great force, but, recovering himself quickly, began to swim between his two casks with a grace and ease that made Fritz clap his hands in delight.

The cow's turn came next, and, as she was of far more value than the ass, I felt very anxious; but I pushed her in gently and with equal success. The two casks supported her in the water, and she began swimming with the *sang-froid* which characterizes her species.

We managed the smaller animals easily, excepting the sow, who resisted furiously; and, when at last she was forced into the water, she swam so quickly away, that to reach the guiding-string would have been impossible: so we were obliged to leave her to her fate. Fortunately she reached the shore long before the rest.

We now embarked, drawing our train after us, and the

Sang-froid (*sŏng-frwä*): coolness or indifference.

wind, filling our sail, carried us smoothly towards the shore. Fritz exulted in his plan, as, loaded as we were, we could never have rowed our boat. I took out my telescope, and was remarking that our party on shore seemed making ready for some excursion, when a loud cry from Fritz filled me with terror. "We are lost!" he exclaimed, "we are lost! See what a monstrous fish!" Though pale with alarm, the bold boy seized his gun, and, encouraged by my directions, fired two balls into the head of the monster, as it was preparing to dart on the sheep. It immediately made its escape, leaving a long red track to prove that it was severely wounded.

I again seized the rudder, and, as the wind blew favorably towards the bay, we arrived, after a few turnings and windings, at a spot where the animals might be able to land. I set them free from the ropes; and they scrambled to the beach.

There was no sign of my wife or children; but a few moments afterward they appeared, and, with a shout of joy, ran towards us. We were thankful to be once more united, and proceeded to release our herd from their swimming-belts, which, though so useful in the water, were exceedingly inconvenient on shore. My wife was astonished at the apparatus.

"How clever you are!" said she.

"I am not the inventor," I replied: "the honor is due to Fritz. He not only thought of this plan for bringing off the animals, but saved one at least from a most fearful death." Then I told them how bravely he had encountered the shark. My wife was delighted with her son's success, but declared that she should dread our trips to the vessel more than ever, knowing that such savage fish inhabited the waters.

Fritz, Ernest, and I began the work of unloading our craft; while Jack, seeing that the poor donkey was still encumbered with his swimming-belt, tried to free him from it. But the donkey would not stand, and the child's fingers were not strong enough to loosen the cordage; finally, he scrambled upon the animal's back, and, urging him on with hand and foot, trotted towards us.

"Come, my boy," I said, "no one must be idle here, even for a moment; you will have riding practice enough hereafter. Dismount, and come and help us."

Jack was soon on his feet. "But I have not been idle all day," he said: "look here!" and he pointed to a belt around his waist. It was a broad belt of yellow hair, in which he had stuck a couple of pistols and a knife. "And see," he added, "what I have made for the dogs! — Here, Floss, Turk!" The dogs came at his call, and I saw that each was supplied with a collar of the same skin, in which were fastened nails, which bristled round their necks in a most formidable manner.

"Capital, capital, my boy!" said I, "but where did you get your materials? and who helped you?"

"Except in cutting the skin," said my wife, "he had no assistance, and as for the materials, Fritz's jackal supplied us with the skin, and the needles and thread came out of my wonderful bag."

Fritz felt rather annoyed at hearing that Jack had cut up the jackal's skin; but he concealed his displeasure as well as he could. Suddenly, however, he exclaimed, "Oh, what an unpleasant smell! Where does it come from?"

"Perhaps it is my belt," said Jack. "It will lose the odor when the skin is dry."

"Ah, well," I said, "till it is dry, Jack must place himself to windward."

At this the boys laughed, and exclaimed, "To windward, Jack! to windward!" But Jack did not trouble himself about sensitive noses. He strutted up and down, quite proud of his girdle, and assumed a martial air which was most amusing.

When the unloading of our boat was accomplished, we started for our tent, and, finding no preparation for supper, I said, "Fritz, let us have a Westphalian ham."

"Ernest," said my wife, smiling, "let us see if we cannot conjure up some eggs."

Fritz got a ham and carried it to his mother triumphantly, while Ernest set before me a dozen white balls with parchment-like coverings.

"Turtles' eggs!" said I. "Well done, Ernest: where did you get them?"

"That," replied my wife, "shall be told when we relate our adventures; we will see now what they will do towards making a supper for you. With these and your ham I do not think we shall starve."

Leaving my wife to prepare supper, we returned to the shore and brought up what we had left of the cargo, collected our herd of animals, and returned to the tent.

The meal which awaited us was as unlike as possible the first supper we had enjoyed there. My wife had improvised a table of a board laid on two casks, and on this was spread a white damask tablecloth, on which were placed knives, forks, spoons, and plates for each person. A tureen of good soup first appeared, followed by a capital omelette, then slices of the ham, and finally some Dutch cheese, butter, and biscuit, with a bottle of the captain's canary wine. While we thus regaled

Improvised: made of such material as lay readily at hand.

ourselves, I related our adventures, and then requested my wife to give us her recital.

"I will spare you the history of the first day," said my good Elizabeth, "spent in anxiety about you, and attending to the signals; but, this morning, satisfied that all was going well, I sought, but in vain, a shady place to rest. I believe this barren shore has not a single tree. Then I began to consider the necessity of searching for a more comfortable spot for our residence, and determined to set out with the children, on a journey of discovery across the river. The day before, Jack had busied himself in skinning the jackal with his knife, and cleaning the skin as well as he was able. He then procured from the nail-chest some long, flat-headed nails, inserted them closely through the long pieces of skin he had cut for collars, cut some sail-cloth to make a double lining over the heads of the nails, and finished by giving me the delicate office of sewing them together.

"Now for our journey. We took our game-bags and some hunting-knives. The boys carried provisions, and I had a large flask of water. I took a small hatchet, and gave Ernest a carbine, which might be loaded with ball; keeping his light gun for myself. Turk went before, evidently considering himself our guide; and, with some difficulty, we crossed the river.

"As we proceeded, I could not help feeling thankful that you had so early taught the boys to use fire-arms, as the defence of Francis and myself now depended on two boys of ten and twelve years of age.

"When we reached the hill you described to us, I was charmed with the smiling prospect, and, for the first time since our shipwreck, ventured to hope for better things. I remarked a beautiful wood, to which I determined to

make our way, for a little shade; and a most painful progress it was, through grass that was higher than the children's heads. As we were struggling through it, we heard a strange rustling sound, and a bird of prodigious size rose and flew away, before the boys could get their guns ready. They were much mortified, and I recommended them to have their guns in readiness, for the birds would not be likely to wait till they loaded them. Francis thought the bird must be an eagle, it was so large; but Ernest ridiculed the idea, and thought it must be of the bustard tribe. Suddenly another bird of the same kind, though still larger, sprang up close to our feet, and was soon soaring above our heads. I could not help laughing to see the look of confusion with which the boys looked upwards after it. At last Jack took off his hat, and making a low bow, said, 'Pray, Mr. Bird, be kind enough to pay us another visit; you will find us very good children.' We found the large nest they had left. It was rudely formed of dry grass, and was empty; but some fragments of egg-shells were scattered near, as if the young had been recently hatched: we therefore concluded that they had escaped among the grass.

"'Look here, Frank,' said Ernest, 'these birds cannot be eagles, for eagles never build nests on the ground, but on high rocks: besides, their little ones cannot run as soon as they are hatched, as chickens can. I noticed, too, that they had white breasts, red-tipped wings, and feathers round the beak. They must be bustards, for that is the description I have read of the bustard.'

"'I am glad we did not shoot the birds, after all,' I said; 'for what would the poor little ones have done without their parents?'

"While talking, we reached the grove of trees. A

crowd of unknown birds flew round us gayly, and seemed to welcome us with their song. The boys followed them with their eyes, and seemed inclined to point their guns; but I prevented them from doing so.

"'You should not destroy God's creatures,' I said, 'excepting for food, and then not cruelly: besides, it would be foolish to waste powder and shot, as well as a pity to kill these pretty little songsters.'

"We found that what we thought a wood was merely a group of a dozen trees, but of a height far beyond any I had ever seen, and apparently belonging rather to the air than the earth, the trunks springing from roots which formed a series of supporting arches. Jack climbed one of the arches, and measured the trunk of the tree with a piece of pack-thread: he found it to be thirty-four feet. I made thirty-two steps round the roots. Between the roots and the lowest branches it seemed about forty or fifty feet. The branches are thick and strong, and the leaves are of a moderate size, and resemble our walnut-tree. A thick, short, smooth turf clothed the ground beneath and around the detached roots of the trees, and every thing combined to render this one of the most delightful spots the mind could conceive.

"Here we rested and made our noonday repast; a clear rivulet ran near us and offered its agreeable waters for our refreshment. I could not but think that if we could contrive a dwelling on the branches of one of these trees, we should be in perfect peace and safety. We set out on our return, taking the road by the seashore to see if the waves had cast up any thing from the wreck. We found a quantity of timber, chests, and casks, all too heavy to bring; but we succeeded in dragging them out of the reach of the tide; our dogs, in the mean time, fishing for

crabs, much to their own satisfaction and to mine, as I now saw they would be able to furnish their own food. As we rested from our rough labor, I saw Floss scratching in the sand, and swallowing something with great relish. 'They are turtles' eggs,' said Ernest. We drove away the dog, and collected about two dozen, leaving her the rest as a reward for her discovery.

"While we were depositing our spoil in the game-bags, we were astonished at sight of a sail. Ernest was certain it was papa and Fritz, and though Francis was in dread that it should be the savages who visited Robinson Crusoe's island, coming to eat us up, we were soon enabled to calm his fears. We crossed the river by leaping from stone to stone, and, hastening to the landing-place, arrived to greet you on your happy return."

While listening to this recital, night came on, and we arranged ourselves in our places as usual, but with much greater comfort upon the mattresses, and under the soft woollen coverlets, I had brought from the wreck.

CHAPTER VI.

BRIDGE-BUILDING.

NEXT morning my wife and I rose early, that we might talk over the changes she appeared so anxious to make.

"I have been considering your plan," I said, "and I think we ought not to be too hasty in changing our abode. We are protected on one side by the sea, and on the other by the rocks, which would also help us to fortify the banks of the stream in case of danger; and, most important of all, we are within reach of the ship, which is still a mine of wealth to us."

"But," answered my wife, "you do not know how unbearable is the noonday heat. During your excursion with Fritz, you were sheltered from the greatest heat by the cool shade of the trees, and were refreshed by delicious fruits. Our only refuge is the tent, where the heat is so suffocating as to make me anxious about the children's health; and our only refreshment, the mussels and oysters which we gather on the shore. As for the safety of this retreat — the jackals had not much difficulty in finding it, and I don't think lions and tigers would have more. The treasures the vessel contains are not to be despised, I know; but I would renounce them gladly to be spared the anxiety your sea-voyages cause me."

"I think we can make a compromise," I said. "I will consent to change our residence to the wood, on condition that we retain this settlement as a provision-store and as

a sort of fortress to which we can retire in time of danger. If this plan be adopted, our first care must be to throw a bridge across the stream, so as to make constant communication between the two places quite easy."

"Do you think so?" cried my wife. "The construction of a bridge will be long and tedious. Could we not load the ass and the cow with our baggage?" I assured her that she was exaggerating the difficulty of the work and the obstacles that stood in our way. "In that case, let us all set to work without further delay," she said. "I am anxious to leave this place as soon as possible."

The boys were quickly aroused, and, on hearing the plan of bridge-building, and the idea of removing to the pleasant region of the grove, were full of eager delight.

After our morning prayer we began to think of breakfast, and, while his mother prepared it, Fritz took the little monkey to the goat for his morning feast. Jack slipped away to the cow, and tried to milk her into his hat; but, as he could not succeed, he laid himself under her, and she allowed him to draw from her a draught of warm fresh milk, as if he had been a young calf.

At last he paused to take breath, and exclaimed, —

"Frank, come, the milk is beautiful: will you have some?"

These words attracted our attention, and his brothers laughed heartily at his scheme; but his mother reproved him for being greedy and not waiting till the cow was milked. She took a vessel, and began milking, and, as Jack saw how cleverly she succeeded, he said, "Ah, if I had only known how to do it like that! I mean to learn, and then I can help mamma."

She filled a cup for each, and put some into a pan to be boiled with biscuit, which made a very palatable dish.

Meanwhile I prepared our boat for a voyage to the ship, being anxious to obtain planks and beams for building the bridge. After breakfast, I went on board with Fritz and Ernest, for, as it was necessary to accomplish our task quickly, double help was needed.

We pushed out to sea, and soon fell in with the current of the stream we had already found so useful. As we passed an islet at the entrance of the bay, we saw quite a cloud of gulls, albatrosses, and other sea-birds, hovering over a spot on the shore. Fritz prepared to fire among them; but I forbade him. I knew so extraordinary a gathering must be caused by something unusual, and I wished to find out what it was. I hoisted the sail, and a slight breeze soon brought us close to the islet.

We discovered, extended partly in the water and partly on the sand, the dead body of a monster fish, on which the birds were regaling themselves so eagerly that they did not notice our approach until we were within gunshot of them, and even then only a few took to flight.

"Why, Fritz," cried Ernest, "this must be the shark you settled so bravely yesterday!"

"I believe it is, Ernest."

Ernest drew out the ramrod of his gun, and struck at the birds right and left: some were so voracious that they remained on the prey, and were knocked down and killed. Fritz cut a few strips of shark's skin, as Jack had done with the jackal's. Then we returned to the boat with our booty.

On reaching the shore, I saw with joy that a number of planks and beams had been loosened from the wreck, and cast on the sands by the waves, which would spare me the trouble of seeking them on the vessel. I determined to choose those most suitable for building our bridge, haul

them in by means of a boat-hook, attach them to our little skiff, in the form of a float, by ropes, and to put to sea with our floating cargo.

While steering carefully homewards, I advised Fritz to nail the strips of the shark's skin to the mast to dry. "Unless it is rendered hard by drying," I said, "we cannot make it useful. When the rough points are ground off, and the skin smoothed and polished, it forms a beautiful material called shagreen."

"I thought," said Ernest, "that shagreen was made of ass's skin."

"Yes, Ernest, you are right. In Turkey, Persia, and Tartary, shagreen is made from the skins of the wild ass. It is harder and thicker than that of the shark; but they soften and polish it by processes which give it a beautiful surface, and the color is a bright green."

We were now approaching the shore: I lowered the sail, and presently we lay alongside the old spot, having returned in less than four hours from the time we started. As we were not expected, none of our dear ones were there to welcome us. When we shouted, however, they came running, Frank with a fishing-rod over his shoulder, and Jack with a number of large lobsters.

"It was I, father, it was I who discovered them!" cried Frank proudly.

"Yes," said Jack; "but I fished them up. I waded up to my knees in the river to catch them. I would have caught more if you had not called me away."

"We have a great many more than we can use," said I. "I think it would even be wise to throw the small ones back into the sea again to let them grow."

"But," cried he, "there are millions more. The river is swarming with them."

"No matter," I answered; "we must not waste the good things God sends us."

Turning in the direction of the stream, he asked me to come with him, for he thought he had found the most suitable place for the erection of the bridge. "I am glad," said I, "that you have for once thrown off your carelessness, and thought of the good of the colony. I am anxious to see if you have made a wise choice: if you have, we will immediately set about bringing up the planks, while your mother prepares our repast."

While examining the spot, a question suggested itself.

"Boys," I said, "suppose our beams should not be long enough to reach to the other side, — the eye cannot measure the distance exactly, and we have no instruments, — what shall we do?"

"Mamma has some pack-thread," said Ernest; "could we not tie a stone to one end, and throw it across the river? We could measure the string when we drew it back, and that would give us the exact width across."

"An excellent idea, Ernest," I replied. "Run, Jack, and fetch the pack-thread."

Jack quickly returned, and, by the contrivance suggested by Ernest, we soon discovered that the distance from one side of the river to the other was eighteen feet.

It appeared quite necessary that the beams should have three additional feet resting on each shore, and this would require the under one, at least, to measure twenty-four feet. Happily, we found more than one which, exceeding this length, fully answered our expectations.

There remained now only one difficulty to overcome. How could we throw such long and heavy pieces of wood across the water? While considering the subject, the

dinner-hour arrived, and, finding that nothing more could be done, we returned to the tent.

Our good housekeeper had prepared for us a dish of crabs, which was very tempting. But before we commenced dinner, she produced two immense bags, which she had made out of a piece of sail-cloth, and had sewed with pack-thread.

"I had no needle large enough to hold the thread," said the mother, "so I contrived to sew with a nail, and

ASS AND PANNIERS.

by patience and perseverance I have finished these travelling-bags. They will hang across the donkey's back like panniers, and contain a great quantity of articles when we change our home."

I praised my dear wife for her ingenuity, and we all seated ourselves to partake of the dinner she had prepared.

It was passed over quickly, for we had no time to lose, and the boys and I then returned to work. As we approached the spot, a plan suggested itself which got us out of all our difficulties.

I fastened one end of a beam to the trunk of a tree, at about four or five feet above the ground, and to the other attached a long rope into which a stone was tied for throwing it across the river. To a tree on the opposite bank I adjusted a pulley, over which I threw the rope, and returned with the end in my hand.

To this extreme end I tied the ropes which were still round the necks of the cow and the ass; then, passing the beam round to the front of the tree, I led the animals away from the water. As they moved slowly forward, the beam rose gently, and then sank gradually, guided by the pulley, till the end rested on the opposite bank.

Fritz and Jack sprang boldly on the beam, and danced lightly and rapidly across the new bridge.

Now that the first beam was laid, the difficulties of the work were greatly removed. The second and third and fourth soon followed, and the foundation of our bridge lay ready before our eyes.

We then cut planks of about eight or nine feet long, to place across the breadth of the bridge; but I did not nail them firmly, as I wished to be able to remove them from the bridge quickly in case of danger, to prevent the passage of enemies, whether men or wild beasts.

It now seemed in every point perfect: the supports were firm, and the passage across complete.

The great exertion had exhausted our strength; and as evening approached, we were glad to return to the tent, and seek refreshment and repose. Once more we knelt to offer our evening prayer, and to thank God for his merciful care of us during the day.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JOURNEY TO THE WONDERFUL TREES.

"YOU must remember," I said the next morning, "that we are now going into an unknown region, and less protected by nature than this. We know not what kind of animals we may encounter, nor whether it is inhabited. It is therefore necessary to be on our guard, and keep together in case of danger or attack."

We knelt, offered our morning prayer, and proceeded to breakfast, which was no sooner finished than I commenced preparations for our journey.

Our first act was to load the ass and the cow with the travelling-bags containing our provisions, tools, cooking-utensils, and other useful things.

All was ready, when my wife came in haste with her magic bag, requesting a place for it. Nor would she consent to leave the poultry as food for the jackals: above all, Francis must have a place, he could not possibly walk all the way. I consented to all, and made a good place for Francis between the bags on the back of the ass.

The children ran for the cocks and hens but with no success whatever, until the mother, scattering some handfuls of grain within the open tent, decoyed the fowls and pigeons into the enclosure, where, when the curtain was dropped, they were easily caught.

All the things that we left that could have suffered from exposure were laid up in the tent, which was well

barricaded with stakes and boxes, both full and empty. We were all well armed, and each carried a bag for provision and ammunition. Every one seemed in good spirits. Fritz marched at the head of our procession with his mother, followed by the cow and the ass and his cavalier, little Frank. The goats, led by Jack, formed the third detachment, with the little monkey on the back of his foster-mother. Ernest followed with the sheep, and I walked last as the rear-guard. The dogs rushed here and there as our adjutants.

As the procession moved on slowly, Ernest remarked,—

"Papa, I think this is a delightful way of travelling. Are there not people who always travel from place to place in this manner?"

"Yes," I replied: "even now the people of Tartary and Arabia, and other nomadic races, follow this sort of life. The patriarchs of whom we read in the Bible wandered from place to place after this fashion. But, for my part, I shall be glad when our wanderings are over."

Thus conversing, we arrived at the bridge, and at this point the sow joined our procession. We had found it impossible to make her follow the other animals; but when she discovered that we had really left her, she hastened to overtake us, and we crossed the bridge without accident, the sow grunting her disapproval of the whole affair.

On the opposite shore the grass looked so fresh and tempting, that our troop scattered themselves right and left to feast upon it. We should have been unable to place them again in rank and file, but for the help of our

Nomadic races: tribes of people having no fixed location, but wandering from place to place for subsistence.

dogs, who, barking and chasing, brought them again into order.

To avoid a second interruption I told our leader to turn to the left, through a part of the country overgrown with tall rank grass, not in the least tempting to the animals.

We had scarcely started, when the dogs suddenly disappeared in the thick grass; and presently their furious barking became mixed with howls of pain, as if they were struggling with some wild beast, and wounded.

Fritz hastily advanced to the spot with his gun raised, and his finger on the trigger; Jack followed fearlessly, carrying his pocket-pistol in his hand; while Ernest, who was nervous and timid, ran behind his mother, yet making ready to fire in case of danger. For my own part, I followed the boys anxiously, with my gun in readiness. The boys reached the spot before me, and the next moment Jack cried out, —

"Papa, come, quick! It is a porcupine!"

I saw as I hastily approached, that he was right, and that the dogs were wounded by the sharp points which protruded from its skin.

Jack, without thought of consequences, drew his pistol from his belt, and shot it dead, making sure of it by a couple of hearty raps on the head; then, giving way to a burst of boyish exultation, he called upon us to help to convey his prize to his mother. This it was not by any means easy to do. Sundry attempts resulted in bloody fingers, till Jack, taking his pocket-handkerchief, and fastening one corner round its neck, ran off, dragging it after him to where his mother awaited us.

"Look, mamma!" he cried. "Isn't this a beautiful prize? I killed it myself with my pocket-pistol; and it will be useful, for papa says the flesh is good to eat."

She congratulated him on his courage and skill. Ernest examined the animal in his usual cool manner, observing that he had in each jaw two long incisors, like those of the hare and squirrel, and that his ears were short and rounded, like a man's. My wife and I began pulling out the bristles from the muzzles of our dogs.

"Jack," said I, "were you not afraid that the porcupine would send its quills into your body? It is said the animal has that power."

"I never thought of it," he replied; "but I think that statement must be a myth."

"You see, however," said I, "that the dogs have not been spared."

"It is true," he answered; "but they threw themselves on the animal. If they had kept at a distance, they would not have been hurt."

"You are right, my son," I said. "The porcupine has not the power of shooting out its quills: his losing some in a fight has probably given rise to the story."

"We must take it with us, papa!" cried Jack. "It is good to eat; please let us take it."

I wrapped it in grass, stroked back the quills, tied it up in some of our bed-clothes folded three times double, and fastened the bundle across the back of the ass behind Frank.

We had scarcely advanced a hundred steps, however, before the ass began to bray, and presently to leap and bound in the most comical manner, till he ended at last by dragging away the bridle by which my wife led him, and starting off at full gallop.

The dogs started after the ass at once, and brought him to a stand-still before we could reach him.

Myth. The word is used here for something fanciful rather than true.

"Oh, what a splendid gallop!" exclaimed Frank, as we arrived at the spot.

"Yes, my child," I replied; "but we ought to thank God that you did not fall off and break your limbs. What could have induced this quiet, patient animal to run away?"

On examination I discovered that the pointed quills of the porcupine had penetrated to the skin of the poor animal. No wonder he leaped under such sharp sensations. The evil was soon removed, and we resumed our journey.

"Oh, what magnificent trees!" exclaimed Ernest. "Look at their height!"

"Indeed, they are magnificent!" I cried. "I own, dear wife, that this is a wonderful place. If we can establish ourselves upon these trees, we may feel secure; for I defy even a bear to climb trees so high, especially with trunks possessing such a smooth bark."

We released the animals from their load, and set them free, to feed with the sheep and goats. Their fore-legs were tied together loosely, that they might not wander far. The sow we left to do as she pleased. And the fowls and pigeons, to their great relief, were at once set at liberty.

We seated ourselves on the soft green turf to consult upon our future dwelling-place. First of all, it was necessary to prepare a lodging, not only as a protection from the cold night-air, but as a security from the attacks of wild beasts, to which we should be exposed if we remained on the ground. By some means this lodging must be made on the branches of the trees.

Fritz had wandered out of sight, and suddenly we heard the report of a gun just behind us; a second shot

followed, and in a few moments he appeared, carrying by its hind-legs an enormous tiger-cat.

"Bravo!" I cried; "you have rendered good service to our fowls and pigeons: your friend there would have made sad havoc in our farmyard."

"I wonder why God created such animals?" said Ernest.

"It is often difficult for us to understand why God has created this or that; but we know there must be excellent reasons for all he does, although we are unable to explain or understand these reasons to our own satisfaction. You are acquainted with one thing useful, even in the tiger-cat, Ernest, and that is the skin; and you know also how many beautiful and warm furs are obtained for winter clothing from the bear, the wild-cat, the ermine, the Siberian squirrel, and many other animals which inhabit cold regions in the north. But, Fritz, tell me how you managed to kill this beast of prey, and where you found him."

"I saw a movement among the foliage of a tree. I went quietly and stood at the foot, and there on a branch I saw this monster. The first shot brought him to my feet, but he was not dead, and, as he tried to rise, I fired a second time, and he moved no more."

"You may think yourself fortunate," I said, "that the creature did not fly at you after the first shot. I think the one you have just killed is a species very common at the Cape of Good Hope and in South America, and so voracious, that even our sheep and goats would not be safe against such a formidable enemy."

"Can we not make use of this beautiful skin?"

"Indeed you can," I replied. "From the legs you can

make cases for knives, forks, and spoons, and of the tail a hunting-belt to carry your pistols."

"But," said Jack, "what is the use of the porcupine's skin?"

"The quills," I replied, "form excellent packing-needles and arrow-heads. We can also make another collar for each of our dogs: indeed, we might easily provide them with coats of mail. The sharp points of the quills would keep their enemies at a distance."

"That would be fun," cried Jack, "to see our brave dogs dressed up in such a fashion." And after this the young people gave me no rest till I had shown them how to remove the skin from the wild-cat and the porcupine.

Meanwhile Ernest and little Frank were busily employed, one in gathering stones to make a cooking-place, and the other in collecting dry branches of trees for a fire.

Presently little Frank appeared with his arms full of dry wood, and something in his mouth, which he was eating with a great relish.

"I've found something so nice!" he cried, — "oh, so nice!"

"My child, what are you eating?" cried his mother. "It may be poisonous."

Frank in a fright allowed his mother to take from his mouth what appeared to be the remains of a small fig.

"Where did you get this?" she asked.

"Yonder, in the grass," replied Frank, "there are thousands of them. The fowls and the pigeons are eating such a lot! and the one I tasted was so nice, that I thought it wouldn't do me any harm."

"Do not be alarmed," I said to my wife as she looked

at me inquiringly. "These trees are a species of mangrove, and bear a kind of fig which I believe is wholesome: as a rule, however, we may consider safe any kind of vegetable or fruit eaten by birds or monkeys. But, Frank," I continued, "you must never eat the fruit you find, or even taste it, till you have shown it to me."

Frank heard my statement about the monkeys, and ran off to present a fig to Master Nip, who seized it hastily, and began eating it with the most comical expressions of delight.

I divided the porcupine into halves: one to be eaten fresh, the other salted. The flesh of the tiger-cat we gave to the dogs. Until dinner was ready I employed myself in forming needles of the porcupine's quills. To produce the eyes I made a nail red-hot, and pierced it through the thickest end of each quill: in a very little time I had manufactured a packet of needles, which gave my wife a very pleasant surprise.

Still occupied with the idea of our castle in the air, I thought of making a ladder of ropes; but this would be useless, if we did not succeed in getting a cord over the lower branches to draw it up, and neither my sons nor myself could throw a stone, to which I had fastened a cord, over these branches, which were thirty feet above us. It was necessary to think of some other expedient. In the mean time, dinner was ready.

We truly enjoyed the excellent soup and the flesh of the porcupine my wife had boiled for us, with biscuit as a substitute for bread.

CHAPTER VIII.

A NIGHT'S LODGING.

WHEN dinner was over, I prepared our night-quarters. I first slung our hammocks from the roots of the tree, which, meeting above us, formed an arched roof; then, covering the whole with sail-cloth, we made a temporary tent, which would at least keep off the night damps and noxious insects.

Leaving my wife engaged in making a set of harness for the ass and cow, whose strength I intended to employ the following day in drawing the beams up to our tree, I walked down with Fritz and Ernest to the beach to look for wood suitable for building our new abode, and also some light rods to form a ladder. For some time we hunted in vain, finding nothing but rough driftwood, utterly unfit for our purpose. Ernest at length pointed out a quantity of bamboos half buried in the sand. These were exactly what I wanted, and, stripping them of their leaves, I cut them into lengths of about five feet each; these I bound in bundles to carry to the tree, and then began to look about for some slight reeds to serve as arrows.

I presently saw what I required in a copse at a little distance. As we approached the marsh, Floss suddenly started forward, barking furiously amid the reeds. The next moment a flock of superb flamingoes, which she had put to flight, with rushing wings rose in the air

FLAMINGOES.

above our heads. Fritz, always alert and on his guard, instantly raised his gun, and fired, bringing down two of the hindmost. One of them fell dead at a little distance; but the other, which was only slightly wounded in the wing, rose quickly, and used his long legs, as if he were on stilts, with the greatest swiftness.

Fritz started forward to secure the dead bird, and at

once sank to his knees in the marshy ground. I followed the wounded bird as quickly as possible, yet should have failed to overtake him, had not Floss rushed forward, and, seizing the bird by the wing, held it firmly till I came up.

The flamingo fought bravely for his life, beating me with his wings with great force; and it was only after a struggle that I succeeded in mastering him.

"O papa!" exclaimed Ernest, "I hope we shall be able to make him tame."

Fritz was examining the dead flamingo, and presently he said,—

"Papa, the flamingo is web-footed, like the goose, and yet he has long legs, and can run like the stork: is not this unusual?"

"No, my boy: there are many birds which possess the swimming feet, and yet have long legs."

"Have all flamingoes beautifully colored plumage like this?" he asked again. "I fancied, as the birds flew, that some of them had not purple and rose-colored wings."

"Probably not," I replied, "for I believe the young flamingoes are of a grayish white. It is only when full grown that their feathers assume such brilliant colors."

While gathering the reeds, I remembered that the larger ones might prove useful in another way. I therefore cut a few of the longest I could find, saying,—

"We shall be able to measure the height of the tree with these, my boys."

"Why, papa," said Ernest, "if you were to tie ten or a dozen, one upon the other, they would not reach the lowest branch."

"Have patience," I said with a smile; "you will learn what I mean to do."

Presently we arrived at our resting-place, laden with

the canes and our booty, and were received by Jack and Frank with outcries of delight, especially when they espied the living flamingo. "I fear," said the mother, "that, with so many living animals, we shall find our supply of food quickly disappear."

"The flamingo," I replied, "will not eat grain, like our poultry, but will be quite satisfied with insects, fish, and little crabs, which it will pick up for itself."

By this time the boys were trying to measure the height of the tree by tying two of the longest pieces of cane together; but they hardly reached the highest point of the arched roots. They watched me with amusement and surprise, as I placed tall reeds in the ground at equal distances from each other, tied strings here and there, till I formed angles, right angles, and at last right-angled triangles.

Fritz looked on with deep interest. I knew he had sufficient knowledge of geometry to comprehend what I was about. When my arrangements were completed, I said, "Well, Fritz, can you tell me now the height of this tree?" He looked thoughtful for a few moments, and then said, "I believe the height of this tree to the first branch is three times the length of the middle string which is fastened to the trunk."

"Quite right," I replied. "Now, Ernest, measure the middle string with my foot-rule, and tell me the height to the branch."

"Nearly forty feet, papa: three times thirteen are thirty-nine."

"Well," exclaimed Jack, "that is wonderful! What a good thing it is that you know it all, papa!"

"I learned it in my young days, Ernest. Youth is the time to learn, my boys: it is too late after the cares of the world fall on our shoulders."

"But, papa," said Ernest, "this does not help us to climb the tree."

"Perhaps not yet; but it decides that we shall want eighty feet of rope for the two sides of our ladder."

I asked my wife to supply me with a ball of thick, strong thread. The enchanted bag did not fail us: the very ball I wanted appeared at her summons.

I tied the end of the ball to one of my arrows, fixed it in my bow, and sent it directly over one of the thickest of the lower branches of the tree, and, falling to the ground, it drew the thread after it. To this I fastened a rope, and drew it over the branch. Charmed with this result, I hastened to complete my ladder. Fritz had measured our ropes, and found two of forty feet each, — exactly what I wanted. I stretched them on the ground about one foot apart; and Fritz cut pieces of cane two feet long, which Ernest passed to me. These I placed in knots which I had made in cords, at the same distance apart, and Jack fastened each end with a long nail to prevent its slipping. In a short time our ladder was completed; and, tying it to the end of the rope which went over the branch, we drew it up without difficulty. All the boys were anxious to ascend; but I chose Jack, as the lightest and most active. His brothers and myself held the ladder firm by the end of the cord. Fritz followed, carrying a bag with nails and hammer. They were soon perched on the branches, huzzaing to us. Fritz secured the ladder so firmly to the branch, that I had no hesitation in ascending myself. I carried with me a large pulley fixed to the end of a rope, and attached it to a branch above us, to enable us to raise the planks necessary to form the groundwork of our habitation; then descended the ladder, satisfied with my success, and full of confidence in the future.

Presently I missed Fritz and Jack, and began to feel anxious. But at that moment there fell upon my ear from the topmost branches of the tree the harmonious tones of two young voices singing the Evening Hymn; and when the song ceased, I called to them to come down to help me collect the animals, and gather wood for a fire to burn all night and protect us from wild beasts.

My wife then displayed her work, — complete harness for our two beasts of burden, and in return I promised her we would establish ourselves next day in the tree. Supper was now ready. One piece of the porcupine was roasted by the fire, smelling deliciously; another piece formed a rich soup: a cloth was spread on the turf, and the ham, cheese, butter, and biscuit were placed upon it.

My wife first assembled the fowls by throwing grain to them to accustom them to the place. We soon saw the pigeons fly to roost on the higher branches of the trees, while the fowls perched on the ladder; the beasts, we tied to the roots, close to us. Now that our cares were over, we sat down to a merry and excellent repast by moonlight; then, after the prayers of the evening, I kindled our watch-fires, and we all lay down to rest in our hammocks. The boys were rather discontented, and complained of their cramped position, longing for the freedom of their beds of moss; but I instructed them to lie, as the sailors do, diagonally, and told them that brave Swiss boys might sleep as the sailors of all nations were compelled to sleep. After some stifled sighs and groans, all sank to rest except myself, kept awake by anxiety for our safety. But gradually I was overcome by fatigue, and towards morning fell asleep, only awaking when all the family were astir.

CHAPTER IX.

A CASTLE IN THE AIR.

AFTER breakfast, my wife told Jack and Ernest to put the harness she had made on the cow and ass, and prepare to accompany her to the shore to bring the wood necessary for our house.

I hesitated at first to allow her to undertake such heavy work; but, as she said truly, it would save time, and, with the help of the ass and the assistance of the three boys, there would be no difficulty.

As soon as they had started, Fritz and I ascended the tree, and found that the centre of the trunk from which the curving branches sprang was in every way suitable for our purpose. These branches, before they bent downwards, were strong, thick, and close together, and almost horizontal for a considerable length: I decided, therefore, to use them as beams for a flooring.

On the upper branches, at about five or six feet above us, I determined to hang our hammocks, and over those, a little higher up, to stretch a large piece of sail-cloth as a ceiling and roof for our aerial castle.

The space between the sail-cloth and the floor I cleared by cutting away branches that grew across it, and, by the time my wife and the boys returned with their first load, every thing was in readiness. By means of the pulley and rope, we were able to draw up, piece by piece, the wood suitable for our flooring.

To make it secure I placed double planks, and when this was completed, Fritz and I erected, with pieces of wood about three feet long, a hand-rail around it, forming an enclosure which already appeared like a room, though as yet without walls or ceiling, excepting those formed by the foliage of the tree. The whole morning was occupied in this work; my wife and the boys having in the mean time brought up three loads of planks and beams from the beach. No one had even thought of dinner; and we had the remains of last night's supper.

After our repast, we returned to our work in the tree, and, slinging up the hammocks on the branches, prepared to raise the sail-cloth over all as a ceiling. This was a far more difficult task, and but for the help of the pulley would never have been accomplished.

At length, to our great joy, we succeeded, and managed to draw it over the upper branches. By fastening the corners to our hand-rail on three sides, we were able to leave the fourth side uncovered as a means of entrance and light; thus before sunset this wonderful resting-place in the tree was completed.

When Fritz and I at last desisted from our work, and descended the rope ladder, we found several small planks which I thought would be suitable for a table and two benches. I succeeded by nailing the planks on the highest parts of the roots for a table, and on the lower curves for benches.

The boys now lighted the fires for the night. The dogs were tied to the tree as a protection against invaders, and we commenced our ascent. My three eldest sons soon ran up the ladder; my wife followed with more deliberation, but arrived safe; my own journey was more difficult, as, besides having Francis on my back, I

had detached the lower part of the ladder from the roots, where it was nailed, in order to be able to draw it up during the night. We were thus as safe in our castle as the knights of old when their drawbridge was raised. We retired to our hammocks free from care, and did not wake till the sun shone brightly in upon us.

We descended, and breakfasted on warm milk, fed our animals, and then, with my children and their mother seated on the turf, I placed myself on a little eminence, and after repeating the service of the day, which I knew by heart, and singing some portions of the 119th Psalm, I told them a little allegory, which we concluded by singing a hymn. My good wife produced from her unfailing bag a copy of the Holy Scriptures, from which I selected such passages as applied to our situation, and explained them to my best ability. My boys remained for some time thoughtful and serious, and, though they followed their innocent recreations, did not lose sight of the lesson of the morning, but, by a more gentle and amiable manner, showed that my words had taken effect.

After dinner, I proposed that we should give names to all the parts of our island known to us, in order that, by a pleasing delusion, we might fancy ourselves in an inhabited country. My proposal was well received, and then began the discussion of names. Jack wished for something high-sounding, such as *Monomotapa* or *Zanguebar*, — difficult words, to puzzle any one that might visit our island. But I objected, as *we* were the most likely to have to use the names ourselves, and should suffer from it. I suggested that we should give, in our own language, such simple names as should point out some circumstance con-

Allegory: a figurative or fanciful story intended to illustrate a useful truth.

nected with the spot. Beginning with the bay where we landed, I called on Fritz for a name.

"*The Bay of Oysters*," said he, "we found so many there."

"Oh, no!" said Jack, "let it be *Lobster Bay;* for there I was caught by the leg."

"Then we ought to call it the *Bay of Tears*," said Ernest, "to commemorate those you shed on the occasion."

"In gratitude to God, should we not name it *Safety Bay?*" said my wife.

We were all pleased with this name, and proceeded to give the name of *Tent House* to our first abode; *Shark Island*, to the little island in the bay where we had found that animal; and, at Jack's desire, the spot where we had cut our arrows was named *Flamingo Marsh.* The height from which we had vainly sought traces of our shipmates received the name of *Cape Disappointment.* The stream was to be *Jackal River*, and the bridge, *Family Bridge.* The most difficult point was to name our present abode. At last we agreed on the name of *Falcon's Nest* (in German, *Falken-hurst*). This was received with acclamations, and I poured out for each of my young nestlings a glass of sweet wine, to drink Prosperity to *Falcon's Nest.* We thus laid the foundation of the geography of our new country, and, closing our Sabbath day with prayer and a glad hymn of praise, retired to rest with peaceful hearts.

CHAPTER X.

THE VISIT TO TENT HOUSE.

ERNEST had used the bow which I had given him very skilfully, bringing down some dozens of small birds — a sort of ortolan — from the branches of our tree, where they assembled to feed on the figs. This induced them all to wish for such a weapon. I was glad to comply with their request, as I wished them to become skilful in the use of these arms of our forefathers, which might be of great value to us when our ammunition failed. I made two bows and two quivers, and, attaching straps to them, armed my young archers.

While Fritz proceeded to finish his skin-case, Jack came to ask my assistance in making a coat of mail for Turk out of the skin of the porcupine.

I first showed him how to clean it with sand and ashes, then assisted him in cutting out and forming bands of the prickly skin. The inner side, while only half dry, was placed on the back of Turk, and fastened round his body. Thus attired, he presented a most remarkable appearance; and in such armor it seemed as if not even a hyena would be able to overpower him.

Floss greatly disapproved of Turk's attire; for if he approached her, or attempted any playfulness, the points of the quills pricked her so sharply that she howled with pain. I therefore removed the coat of mail from Turk's back, until another could be made for his comrade,

and desired the boys only to put them on at night, or when any danger of attacks from wild beasts rendered it necessary.

Jack decided to make a cap for himself out of the porcupine's skin: so he stretched the remainder over the roots of the tree to dry.

These employments filled up the morning till dinner-time. As the heat became less oppressive, we prepared to set out to walk to Tent House to renew our stock of provisions, and endeavor to bring the geese and ducks to our new residence; but, instead of going by the coast, we proceeded up the river till we reached the chain of rocks, and continued under their shade till we reached the cascade, where we could cross, and return by Family Bridge.

Our walk by the brook proved most unusually agreeable. During the whole route we enjoyed the pleasant shade from large trees in full foliage, or from the ridge of rocks which extended for a long distance between the beach and the stream. The soft grass under our feet formed a far more pleasant path than the pebbles and sand of the shore. Altogether the place was so attractive, that my wife and I did not hurry ourselves, but sauntered along at our ease, while the boys rambled hither and thither in search of new discoveries. As we came to the end of the wood, and I was about to collect my young people before continuing our way, I saw them approaching at full gallop; and this time the deliberate Ernest arrived first, but gasping for breath, and unable to utter a word respecting the green roots which he held before my eyes.

"Papa!" he cried at last, "Look! potatoes, potatoes!"

"What!" I exclaimed: "that news is too good to be true."

"I know they are potatoes, papa," said Fritz confidently. "Ernest has been very lucky to discover such a valuable plant."

"I am still afraid," said his mother, "there may be other plants in this country, with bulbous roots, resembling potatoes. We are so ready to believe what we earnestly wish for."

"Let us go to the spot," I said. And with eager haste the boys led us to the place. A few moments served to convince me of the joyful fact, that a little forest of potato-plants in full flower lay at our feet; and humble as the flowers might be, they were of far more value to us than all the roses of Persia.

"Oh!" cried Jack, "I knew they were potatoes! What a treat!"

As he spoke, he began to dig the roots up with his hands. Master Monkey instantly followed his example; but he dug more quickly and cleverly than Jack, for he picked out the ripest; and in a very short time quite a large heap of potatoes had been gathered; and our sack and game-bag were as full as possible of the valuable vegetable.

Ernest proposed that we should at once return to Falcon's Nest, for two reasons: first, because the potatoes were a heavy load; and, second, that we might cook them for supper, and have a feast. But I reminded him that there existed still stronger reasons why we should go on, and we continued our walk pleasantly and in good spirits, in spite of the heavy load.

To reach Jackal Brook we had to struggle through the high grass, with the chain of rocks on our right; and, as we emerged from it, a beautiful prospect lay before us, very different from any thing we had hitherto seen. The

face of the shelving, rocky wall presented a sight of wonderful magnificence, resembling greatly a European conservatory.

There were tropical plants of all descriptions, — prickly shrubs, and flowers of every hue, which could only be reared in hothouses at home: the Indian fig; the aloe, crested with white blossoms; the tall, stately cactus, with its prickly leaf and amber flowers; creeping plants winding their tendrils over every stem, and spreading perfume around us from their many-colored blossoms.

But above all we were delighted to find fruit-trees, and among others, to our great joy, the royal anana, — the pine-apple, — "the king of fruits."

I found it necessary to warn the boys that, by eating too many, they would make themselves ill, and their pleasure would be changed to pain.

I presently discovered among the various prickly-leaved plants a karatas, a kind of aloe, partly in bloom, but chiefly covered with young shoots. This plant was to me a welcome sight.

"See, boys!" I called out: "this is a more valuable discovery than the ananas. The under foliage of this plant resembles the anana; but the stem is far more elegant. Observe how slender and upright it grows, and what a beautiful blossom!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Ernest, "all that is nothing if there is no fruit. The pine-apples are far more valuable, papa. We will give up willingly all these flowers and leaves to you, if we may keep the ananas." And I could see by their looks that all the rest agreed with him.

"You are like the rest of the world," I said with a laugh: "you give up a true and lasting advantage for the sake of a passing enjoyment. However, we will talk

about this by and by; now I want a light. Will you strike one for me, Ernest? the flint and steel are here."

"But, papa, there is no tinder here, nor a match," said Jack: "we can't get a light."

"Of course not," I said; "but tell me, Ernest, supposing we had no tinder, and our supply was all used up, how should we obtain a light?"

"We should be obliged to imitate the savages, and rub two pieces of wood together till they caught fire."

"A difficult performance," I replied, "especially for those who are not accustomed to it. I have no doubt that, after rubbing the wood together for a whole day, you would not succeed in getting a light."

"I suppose, then, we should have to wait patiently till we found a more suitable tree, with the wood already prepared."

"Not even then," I said. "We burn linen now in a tinder-box; but we cannot continue to do so here, for linen is useful for better purposes, and we have not more than we need. Would it not be well for us to find our tinder ready prepared and growing?"

With these words I broke off a thin branch of the karata-tree, peeled off the outer bark, took out the pith, then, laying a piece on the flint, struck it with the steel; and in a moment the new-fashioned tinder was in a flame.

The boys looked on astonished for a few moments, then cried out joyfully, —

"Oh, how wonderful! Long live the tinder-tree!"

"That is not the only use of this tree," I said. "I am

This story was written in the German language long before lucifer matches were invented or known, even in England. A tinder-box containing half-burnt rag, with a flint and steel, and matches tipped with brimstone, were the only means of obtaining a light in those days.

glad to be able to inform your mother, that, when she wishes to mend our clothes, I can supply her with thread."

"Ah! indeed that will be a treasure," said my wife. "It has troubled me greatly to have only pack-thread to sew with."

"Your trouble will be over now," I said.

With this I split a leaf, and drew out a quantity of very strong, yet beautifully fine thread, certainly not longer than the leaf, yet still long enough to form a needleful.

"You see, children," I remarked to the boys, "it is not safe to judge by appearances. The karata which you despised proves far more useful than the dainty ananas, which only tickle the palate."

"Yes," cried Ernest, "I'll own that now. But what is the use of all the other prickly plants that grow here in such abundance?"

"They are useful in some way, no doubt," I replied, "although we may not understand how. That plantain is a most valuable tree," I continued, pointing to it as I spoke: "it flourishes best on dry, barren soil, and produces the largest and most juicy leaves. It appears to derive its nourishment more from the air than the earth, and bears a species of fig, which, in climates like this, is wholesome and very refreshing."

In a moment my little active Jack was climbing the rocks to gather some of these figs; but he had not remarked that they were covered with thousands of slender thorns, finer than the finest needles, which terribly wounded his fingers. He returned, weeping bitterly. Having rallied him a little for his greed, I extracted the thorns, and showed him how to open the fruit, by first cutting off the pointed end as it lay on the ground: into

this I fixed a piece of stick, and then pared it with my knife. The novelty of the expedient recommended it, and they were soon all engaged eating the fruit, which they pronounced very good.

In the mean time I saw Ernest examining one of the figs very attentively. "O papa," said he, "what a singular sight! The fig is covered with small red insects."

"Ah, another discovery!" I exclaimed. "Let me look at them. Why, they are cochineal!"

"But what are cochineal?" asked Ernest.

"Insects that live on the leaf of this plant, which contains red sap, or on the blood-red berries, from which it obtains that bright-red color. They are collected in America, where people shake them from the trees into a cloth. When they are dried and packed together, they form a very important part of the color-trade, as from these insects is produced the richest and most beautiful scarlet."

"Well," said Fritz, "that fig-tree is a wonderful plant."

"I can tell you of a third advantage belonging to our fig-tree," I said. "Its branches form a thick shelter and defence against wild beasts, and even serve as a protection from the attacks of men; for although the enemy might be able to cut down this fence, yet the performance would take a long time, and give an opportunity to escape."

While thus talking, we reached the shallow part of Jackal River, and, stepping cautiously over the pebbles, soon arrived at our tent.

Fritz ran to obtain a supply of powder and shot; my wife and little Frank hastened to fill the jar with butter from the cask; while Ernest and Jack repaired to the pond, and tried to catch the ducks and geese. But the creatures had been living alone, and were quite wild.

The boys found, at last, that to catch them they must use stratagem.

Ernest had in his pocket a piece of cheese, which he broke into small portions, and, tying them at the end of long threads, threw them into the water as bait. In a few minutes the geese and ducks were drawn on shore, and fastened in pairs on our shoulders outside the game-bags, where they travelled very comfortably.

The bag destined for the salt was full of potatoes; but we managed to fill up the spaces between them with salt, and hoped to make that quantity last till we could again visit the tent. I was obliged to remove Turk's coat of mail, and fasten on his strong back the heavy sack of potatoes and salt.

As we took the road to Falconhurst, our little caravan presented a droll appearance; the stretched-out necks of the ducks and geese on our shoulders, who kept up a continual gabbling, adding to the ridiculous spectacle.

The gayety and gladness of our hearts made us forget the weight of our burdens; and we made no complaint till we arrived at Falcon's Nest, and the cause was removed.

The mother, without delay, prepared to light a fire and cook the longed-for potatoes, and the delighted boys ran here and there, eager to help; while I milked the cow and the goat, and set at liberty the imprisoned ducks and geese, after cutting the large feathers of their wings to prevent them from flying away.

At length the much-praised and delicious supper was ready, and we enjoyed it as much as we had anticipated. It was not without heart-felt thanks to God for his mercies that we retired, fatigued and sleepy, to our airy castle.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SLEDGE, THE MASQUERADE, AND THE KANGAROO.

I HAD observed on the shore a quantity of wood, which I thought suitable for making a sledge to convey our casks and heavy stores from Tent House to Falcon's Nest. At dawn of day I woke Ernest, whose inclination to indolence I wished to overcome. Leaving the rest asleep, we descended, and, harnessing the ass to a strong branch of a tree that was lying near, proceeded to the shore. I had no difficulty in selecting proper pieces of wood, which, having sawed to the right length, we tied together, and laid across the bough, so that the patient animal drew them very contentedly. Adding to the load a small chest which we found half buried in the sand, we returned homeward, Ernest leading the ass, while I assisted by raising the load with a lever when we met with any obstruction. My wife had been somewhat alarmed; but seeing the result of our expedition, and hearing of the prospect of a sledge, she was satisfied.

The chest was eagerly opened and examined, but found to contain nothing of importance. It was a sailor's locker, and the clothes and linen it held had been completely spoiled by sea-water.

Fritz and Jack had been shooting ortolans: they had killed about fifty, but had consumed so much powder and shot, that, when they wished to shoot again, their mother

interfered, representing to them, that, at such a rate, their store of powder and shot would soon fail, and that for the present she had birds enough.

I agreed with this sensible advice, and taught them to make snares for the birds, of threads from the karata-leaves. My wife and her two younger sons busied themselves with these, while I, with the elder boys, began to construct the sledge. As we were working, we heard a great commotion among our poultry. They screamed and cackled and fluttered about in such alarm, that we ran with all speed to the spot.

Ernest, by chance, saw the monkey rush under one of the arched roots with a newly-laid egg in his paw: he disappeared behind the tree as the boy approached, for he was longing to make a meal of his stolen prize. But Ernest was too quick for him, and at length found the egg hidden in the grass with three others. Eagerly he carried the four to his mother, who received them with joy and thankfulness.

We decided to punish the young freebooter by keeping him a prisoner during the hours that the hens generally laid, and at the same time use him to find the eggs that were not laid in the ordinary nests.

Jack, who had mounted our rope ladder to search for a suitable spot on which to place the bird-traps, came down hastily with the news that a pair of our pigeons were building a nest among the branches. I gave orders that there should be no shooting in the trees, and that the idea of placing traps for the birds must for the present be set aside. As the boys followed me to the spot at which I had left the wood, little Frank said, —

"Papa, why can't we sow gunpowder instead of those seeds to feed the animals? it would be much more useful than fodder to us."

His brothers laughed heartily, and Ernest exclaimed,—

"Why, Franky, gunpowder is not a seed: it will not grow like oats!"

"Quite right, Ernest," I said. "But how is it obtained?"

"I know," he replied: "it is made of saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal mixed together."

"And who discovered that these substances united would form gunpowder?" I asked.

"Roger Bacon, a monk," replied Ernest. "He was a native of England, and lived in the thirteenth century."

At this moment the boys were called by their mother, and I at once commenced the construction of my sledge. I united two curved pieces of wood by three pieces across, one in front and one behind, with a third in the middle; then, fastening the drawing-ropes to the outer points, my sledge stood complete.

I saw my wife and the boys occupied in plucking the birds, while at least two dozen were roasting before the fire on the blade of a Spanish sword, belonging to one of the ship's officers, as a spit. It seemed somewhat wasteful to cook so many at once; but my wife explained that she was getting them ready for the butter-cask I was to bring for her on the new sledge, as I had advised her to preserve them half-cooked, and packed in butter.

I prepared to start for our tent home with my sledge directly after dinner. The mother proposed during my absence to wash the clothes and linen while the boys were taking a bath. I promised that Ernest should bathe on the journey, as I preferred to take him with me instead of Fritz, who was better able to protect those who remained behind.

In addition to arms, each of us carried, in our girdles

of shark's skin, not only a hunting-knife, but a beautiful case, made by Fritz, containing a knife, fork, and spoon.

We harnessed both the cow and the ass to the sledge, inviting Floss to accompany us, but sending Turk back as a protection to those at home, and with a fond farewell started merrily on our way.

As I knew the sledge would slide more easily on the sandy shore than through the high thick grass, I drove along the coast, and arrived without adventure at Tent House. We unharnessed the animals, and left them to find pasture, while we loaded the sledge, not only with the butter-cask, but also with the powder-barrel, the cask of cheese, the bullets, small shot, and Turk's coat of mail. So absorbed were we in this work, that we did not at first notice the absence of our animals, who, attracted by the fresh green turf, had wandered away across the bridge over the Jackal Brook to the opposite shore, and had quite disappeared. I desired Ernest to go in search of them with the dog, while I endeavored to find a convenient spot in which to bathe.

On arriving at Safety Bay, I noticed a little creek, enclosed on one side by a marsh full of splendid Spanish canes, and on the other by a chain of rocks stretching far into the sea, and forming a most secluded bathing-place.

I called Ernest; but, as he did not make his appearance, I went to look for him. What was my surprise at discovering the youngster lying at full-length in a shady spot behind our tent, as sound asleep as a dormouse; while the two animals I had sent him to find were comfortably grazing unwatched, and wandering where they pleased!

"Up, up!" I exclaimed, rousing the sleeper: "why, these animals might have crossed the bridge, and given us a pretty chase!"

"Oh, let them alone, papa!" he replied, as he lazily roused himself. "I have taken away a few planks from the bridge, and it's not likely such timid fellows would venture over it now."

"Your idleness has made you ingenious, Ernest," I replied. "And now, while I take my bath, go and gather the store of salt," I continued. "I will not be long, as I wish you also to have your turn."

I found the sea bath most cool and refreshing, and hastened as quickly as possible, after coming out of the water, to search for the boy. I suddenly heard his voice exclaiming, —

"Papa, papa, come quick! A fish, an enormous fish! I can scarcely hold him! he is tearing away my line!"

I ran in the direction of the voice, and found the boy stretched upon the grass, and struggling with all his might to retain a fish whose efforts threatened to draw him into the water, line, rod, and all.

I quickly took the fishing-rod from his hand, and lengthened the line to give the fish a little freedom, then gradually drew it into shallow water, where it was stranded and unable to escape. Ernest stepped into the water, and put an end to its struggles with a blow of his hatchet.

Drawing the fish to shore, I found it was a magnificent salmon of about fifteen pounds' weight, which would form a most excellent addition to our store of provisions, and very much please the mother.

"This time you have not been idle," I said, "but have worked, not only with your head, but with hands and feet, and, indeed, your whole body. I congratulate you with all my heart; you have not only acted bravely, but have provided us with food for several days."

I determined to clean our booty, and sprinkle it with salt, that we might carry it home in good condition, and while doing so, and harnessing the cattle to the sledge, Ernest had his bath. He did not keep me waiting long, and we soon crossed the bridge on the way back to Falcon's Nest.

Just as we reached the high grass, our watchful companion Floss rushed forward, barking loudly, and disappeared.

I followed quickly, and saw a most singular-looking animal flying from the dog with most astonishing leaps.

I seized the moment when Floss sprang aside to raise my gun and fire, but so rashly that I failed. Ernest, however, saw the creature stoop and hide himself in the long grass. Carefully keeping his eye on the spot, he moved nearer with silent footsteps, and, raising his gun, shot the animal dead.

We hastily ran to the scene of combat, and with wonder and surprise discovered that Ernest had killed a most singular creature. It was about the size of a sheep, had a tail like a tiger, the face and skin of a mouse, and ears as large as those of a hare. Its fore-paws, resembling those of a squirrel, were armed with claws, but too short to be of use in walking, especially as the hind-legs were of a great length. I tried in vain to remember whether I had ever seen an animal at all resembling it.

"We must examine the creature systematically, Ernest," I said. "Look first at its teeth."

"It has four incisor teeth, papa, — two upper and two under, — like a large squirrel," he replied.

"Then he belongs to the same species," I exclaimed. "Can you remember the names of any of the rodent animals, Ernest?"

"I know a few," he replied, — "the mouse, the dormouse, the squirrel, the hare, the beaver, and the jerboa."

"The jerboa!" I exclaimed. "You have put me on the right track. I quite believe that this one belongs to the species of animals who have a pouch beneath the breast, in which the female carries its little ones while they are young. No doubt, you have shot a female kangaroo. They were not known till the renowned Captain Cook discovered them in New Holland."

Placing it carefully with the other treasures, we continued our journey to Falcon's Nest, where we arrived at a late hour, receiving a joyful welcome, especially after a glimpse at the contents of the sledge, which my wife and the boys proceeded to examine with wondering eyes.

And we were no less astonished at the appearance presented by the young people who came to meet us. One was wrapped in a long blue sailor's shirt, stepping every now and then on the hem as he walked; another wore a pair of trousers, the waistband of which reached to his shoulders; the third was tied up in a jacket which descended to his knees, and gave him the appearance of a walking portmanteau. In this strange attire they approached us gravely, seeming as proud of their masquerade as a prince on the stage.

They had been obliged, while the clothes were drying, to dress themselves in any thing they could find in the sailor's locker which I had brought from the shore; and they made so merry over it, that their mother permitted them to continue in their masquerade, that Ernest and myself might join in the fun.

We laughed at the performance as much as they could desire, and then proceeded to display the contents of the

New Holland: Now called Australia.

sledge before their astonished eyes, — the butter and cheese-casks, the canes, salt, salmon, and at last, to crown the whole, the dead kangaroo.

After unloading the sledge, I distributed salt to the animals, which was to them a welcome feast. I finished the evening by opening and cleaning the kangaroo; and, after hanging it on a branch of a tree till the morning, I gave the refuse to Turk and Floss, who evidently considered it a delicious supper.

We ourselves sat down to a famous supper of the fish caught by Ernest, and some baked potatoes. It was soon finished, for we were tired out, and longing for rest and sleep.

CHAPTER XII.

A VOYAGE TO THE WRECK. — THE RAFT.

ON the following morning I took off the beautiful skin of the kangaroo.

It required great care to separate it from the flesh without injury, and occupied so long a time, that breakfast was ready before I had finished. I announced my plan of visiting the vessel, and requested Fritz to make preparations.

Having collected our arms and provisions, I called Ernest and Jack to give them some orders; but they were nowhere to be found. Their mother thought they had gone to dig some potatoes; and, as they had taken Turk with them, we considered them in safe keeping, and set out without waiting for their return.

Setting aside other anxiety, Fritz and I said farewell to the mother and Frank; reminding her of that Providence in whom she trusted, and who would also watch over and take care of us in our voyage to the wreck, and bless the means we used to secure our own safety.

As we reached the Jackal Bridge, Jack and Ernest darted out from behind a bush, screaming and laughing over the trick they had played upon us. They owned that they had come so far in the hope that I would take them with me to the ship. I assured them that this was impossible, for not only would they be too many for the boat, but those at home would be anxious at

their non-appearance. I sent them back with the message that we would remain all night, — an announcement which I had lacked courage to make myself, — steered our little boat into the current which flowed into Safety Bay, and very quickly reached the wreck.

Our first care was to collect materials to construct a raft, which would carry more than our boat of tubs could hold. Choosing a dozen empty water-barrels, we nailed them solidly together, and put a flooring of planks above, surrounding it with a railing about two feet high.

This occupied the most of the day. When it was finished, we took a survey of the vessel, to decide what would be most useful to take with us, and, after a comfortable meal, retired to the captain's cabin, and slept well, the elastic mattresses forming a far more pleasant couch than the hammocks at Falcon's Nest.

At dawn the next morning we began to load our two boats. After plundering the cabins we had ourselves occupied during the voyage, we took the locks from the doors, and the bolts from the shutters. The contents of a couple of sea-chests belonging to the ship's officers were a great treasure to us; but of still greater value were those of the ship's carpenter and the gunsmith.

The captain's trunk was full of all sorts of things, some of which were so costly that we were quite dazzled. There lay gold and silver watches, chains, buckles, studs, and a snuff-box, most probably intended as presents, or as stock for profitable trade in a new colony. A well-lined cash-box full of doubloons and piastres presenting itself to our eyes, Fritz fell naturally into the error of beginning our plunder with it. But I quickly pointed

Doubloon: a Spanish coin of the value of about fifteen dollars.
Piastre: the Spanish dollar.

out other objects which would prove far more useful to us than the captain's gold and silver; a case of knives and forks, for instance. Among two dozen beautiful young European fruit-trees, which had been most carefully packed for the voyage, I recognized the pear, apple, orange, almond, peach, chestnut, and vine, — fruit which in our dear native home we had so often enjoyed.

Proceeding in our search we discovered a number of iron bars of immense strength, then a grindstone, wagon and cart wheels, a complete set of smith's tools, hatchets and shovels, chains, iron and copper wire, a ploughshare, a hand-mill, and, last but not least, sacks full of maize, peas, oats, and other grain: in a word, a seemingly inexhaustible store of articles evidently intended for the support of a European colony to be established in distant lands. There were even parts of a saw-mill, which it was evident might be fitted together with little trouble, if we had strength enough to lift it.

And now the question arose, Of all these valuable things, which should we take with us and which leave behind?

I decided to choose powder and shot, iron, lead, grain, the fruit-trees and several tools, and of these to place on the raft and in our tub-boat as much as we could possibly carry. Fritz asked that he might take the captain's trunk, and have one of the gold watches for himself.

Among other things we had found a large magnetic needle and a mariner's compass.

On seeing two harpoons used in whale-fishing, Fritz begged me to fasten one to the bow of our little boat, that, in case of attack from large fish, or even a shark, we might be ready to defend ourselves.

The raft was fastened to our tub-boat by ropes firmly

attached at each corner, and, not without fear of disaster, we directed our course toward the shore.

The wind lightened our work, and we proceeded without meeting with the least impediment.

Fritz observed in the distance a large and strange-looking body floating on the waves, and asked me to examine it through the telescope.

I discovered at once that it was a turtle asleep on the surface of the water, and entirely unconscious of our approach.

Fritz begged me to steer towards it, that he might examine the singular creature more closely. He had his back to me, and the sail floated between us: I was therefore quite unaware of his movements till a violent shock caused the boat to turn and thrill, while a noise as of a rope running through a reel was followed by a second shock and a rapid rushing forward of the boat.

"What are you about, Fritz?" I cried.

"Caught, caught!" cried the youth eagerly. "I took him by surprise."

I saw at once that my boy had really struck the turtle with the harpoon, and that the wounded animal was swimming rapidly away, and drawing the boat after him; for the harpoon was fastened by a rope to the windlass.

Lowering the sail, I rushed to the fore-part of the boat to cut the cord with my hunting-knife and set the turtle free, but Fritz begged me to wait, assuring me there was no danger.

"I can cut the rope instantly, if it is necessary," he said.

Drawn by the turtle, we advanced with such rapidity that I had enough to do, in steering, to keep our craft in a direct line, and so avoid being driven on the rocks.

I noticed also that the turtle was endeavoring to reach the open sea against the wind, which blew landward. I hoisted the sail, and by degrees we were drawn into the current leading from Safety Bay to the wreck, and at last to a soft sloping shore not far from Falcon's Nest. Without delay I jumped into the shallow water, and despatched the turtle with my axe.

Fritz fired his gun as a signal of our arrival, and as usual all came to greet us. Great was their surprise, not only at the value of our cargo, but at the strange mode by which it had been brought into harbor.

I sent for the sledge to remove a part of our load, as the ebbing tide was leaving our vessels almost dry upon the sand.

The first article to be placed upon it was the turtle, which was of an enormous size, and weighed at least three hundred pounds. To keep it in its place we were obliged to pile up the mattresses and other light articles around it.

To assist the two animals in drawing their heavy load to Falcon's Nest, each exerted all his strength, some pushing, others pulling, and so marched in joyous procession towards home.

Our first care on arriving was to unload the turtle, and lay him on his back, as otherwise we could not remove the shell, or make use of the delicate flesh. My wife doubting the possibility of taking off the shell without great difficulty, I seized a hatchet, and with one blow on the breast of the animal separated a part from the shell, cutting off as much of the flesh as would serve for our supper. I advised the mother to cook it in the piece of shell, adding only a little salt.

"But I must first cut away this green fat which is

attached to the meat," she exclaimed: "it appears to be very disgusting."

"No, no, my dear!" I cried, "that green fat is the best part, and will give a most delicious flavor to our evening dish. If there is too much, remove what you think proper, and it can be salted down with the flesh that remains. The head, the paws, and the entrails we will give to the dogs."

"And the shell," cried Fritz — "could we not make it into a water-trough? It would be so pleasant to have clean fresh water for our bath, or for washing our hands."

"That would indeed be useful," I replied, "if your plan could be carried out. But a trough requires something to support it; and for that we should want loam or clay to cement our stones."

"Oh! I can supply you with clay," exclaimed Jack, putting in his word. "There is a splendid heap under the roots of our tree."

"I am glad to hear such news," I replied. "Where did you find it, Jack?"

"He brought it home this morning from the banks of the river," said his mother, "and was so besmeared with mud and clay, that I was obliged to give him a thorough washing."

"Ah, yes, mamma! but, you know, I told you I should never have discovered the clay if I had not slipped while I was walking on the shore. No wonder my face and hands were in such a condition."

"When you have decided about the water-trough," said Ernest, "I will show you some roots that I have discovered; our old sow eats them as if they were delicious. They appear to be a sort of radish-root."

"You were right not to taste one," I said, "for many

things are suitable for animals which are injurious to human beings. How did you discover them?"

"I was rambling about this morning," he replied, "and noticed the sow scraping among the shrubs, and swallowing something very greedily: so I drove her away, and found a number of the roots she had dug up."

After examining them carefully, I exclaimed, —

"If I am not mistaken, my son, you have made as useful a discovery as that of the potatoes. I believe this is the manihot, or yam, of which cassava-cakes are made in the East. But it must be carefully prepared, otherwise it will not be edible, for it contains a dangerous poison."

While talking, we had been busily engaged in unloading the sledge, and, that task being now completed, I again set off with the three elder boys to bring another load from the boat before supper. The mother and Frank remained behind to prepare and cook the flesh of the turtle, so that when we returned, tired and hungry, we might find a royal dish awaiting us.

We loaded the sledge with as much as it would carry, — the two chests, the wagon-wheels, the hand-mill (which the discovery of the manihot rendered doubly important and valuable to us), and as many smaller things as we could find room for.

The supper of turtle, which the kind mother had prepared, proved simply delicious, and when we ascended to our sleeping-rooms in the tree, and laid ourselves down on the mattresses brought from the ship, we quickly sank into sweet and refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WHEELBARROWS. — CASSAVA CAKES.

I ROSE at daybreak next morning, harnessed the ass to the sledge, summoned the dogs, and went to the beach. Both the boat and raft were still safe; and, without delay, I placed upon the sledge a light load, and returned to Falcon's Nest. After a hasty breakfast, we repaired again to the shore, for I was anxious to have the boat and the raft unloaded before noon, that they might be ready to float as soon as the tide served.

By the time we reached Falcon's Nest with our last load, the tide had risen sufficiently to float the vessels, and I steered at once to Safety Bay; for the beautiful weather and the calm sea tempted me to venture on another voyage to the wreck.

It was late, and I merely collected what could be packed quickly and without much trouble. Jack, who ran here and there, found a wheelbarrow; and Fritz discovered something far more useful, — the ship's pinnace, carefully packed in the centre of an enclosure, and supplied with two small cannon. To raise the boat from its present position, and get it fitted together and launched, would require strength and skill, and I saw that this was not the time to commence such an undertaking; and I therefore overlooked the boys as they loaded the raft, advising them to choose the most

Pinnace: A kind of little ship with a four-cornered stern sail.

useful articles, among others a copper kettle, a grindstone, two large iron plates, a powder-cask, a box of flint-stones (which were most welcome to me), several tobacco-graters, and two more wheelbarrows beside Jack's. We again set sail, for I was anxious to avoid the land wind, which generally rose after sunset.

As we neared the shore, a group of figures standing in a long row regarded us with great curiosity.

"Well!" I exclaimed, "are we in a country inhabited by pygmies?"

"They are Liliputians, papa!" cried Jack.

As we came nearer, my knowledge of natural history came to my aid. "They are penguins," I exclaimed, "and can be as easily caught as the boobies which Ernest drove from the body of the dead shark. Although excellent swimmers, they are helpless on land, for they can neither fly nor run from danger."

No sooner had the boat reached shallow water than out sprang Jack, and waded to the shore. He was among the penguins before they had noticed him, and had knocked down five or six. The rest hastily plunged into the water, swimming and diving so quickly, that they soon vanished.

I examined the prey, and found two birds dead, but the rest only stunned; indeed, they were very gravely attempting to waddle away. We seized them, and, after tying their legs together, left them on the shore till we had filled our wheelbarrows as full as possible with articles from our boat.

My wife was delighted with our barrows and their contents, excepting that she looked rather doubtfully at the iron plates and the tobacco-graters. We lost no time in setting free the living penguins; but I tied them by the

leg to a tree among our ducks and geese, in the hope that they would become tame, and by degrees reconciled to their new abode.

I warmly praised the industry of the two boys, who, during our absence, had collected a splendid store of potatoes, and a large number of roots similar to those which Ernest had discovered on the day previous, and which I recognized as manioc or tapioca.

"Ah, yes, papa!" said little Frank; "but what would you say to our field of Indian corn, and pumpkins, and melons?"

"Oh, you chatterbox!" exclaimed his mother. "I did not wish your father to know of this till the plants were above the ground."

"I am sorry," I replied; "but the surprise has only occurred a little sooner, and I am equally pleased. Where did you find seeds?"

"From the magic bag," she replied, "and I sowed them in the soil after we had removed the potatoes."

"You have done well, dear wife," I said. "I hope your plan will be successful."

The tobacco-graters were lying on the ground near us, and my wife, pointing to them, inquired, —

"Of what use are those tobacco-raspers, dear husband?"

"They are to be the means of providing you with fresh bread."

"I cannot imagine," she exclaimed, "what tobacco-graters have to do with new bread! Besides, even if you had flour, where is the baking oven?"

"Flat cakes can be baked upon these iron plates," I replied. "And, as for flour, that can be obtained from the cassava-roots discovered by Ernest. If you will make a small strong bag of sail-cloth, we will try the experiment with our new pastry before we sleep to-night."

My wife readily agreed to get the bag ready; but I could see that she doubted my judgment, for she filled the newly-arrived copper kettle with potatoes, which she placed on the fire, to be ready for our supper in case the bread-baking should be a failure.

In the mean time, I spread a cloth over the ground, and gave each of the boys a grater, and one of the carefully-washed manioc-roots, resting the end on the cloth. In a short time we had a heap of what appeared to be moist white sawdust.

When a sufficient quantity had been scraped, I filled the bag and tied the mouth of it tightly, so that when pressed, only the poisonous sap might flow out between the threads of the cloth.

To obtain the means of pressing, I laid two or three smooth planks on one of the roots of the fig-tree which held our aerial castle, and, placing the bag of flour upon them, covered it with another plank, across which I laid one of our levers, with one end under the arched root, heaping upon the other end lead, iron bars, and stones, with every heavy article I could find; and very soon the sap was seen flowing to the ground below.

"I think we could commence bread-making at once," exclaimed Fritz, "not a drop is falling from the bag now."

"I am quite willing," I replied; "but, before we attempt to make bread for ourselves, a cake must be baked for the chickens and the ape; if they eat it willingly, and without harm, we may safely follow their example."

The bag was opened and the meal spread out to dry. I moistened a small quantity with water, and made a cake, which was laid on one of the iron plates over a clear fire, made as usual between large stones on the earth; and, as soon as the under-side was brown, it was turned, and, when sufficiently baked, taken out to cool.

Meanwhile the boys attracted a few of the fowls and the ape to the spot; but the cake exhaled such a delicious odor, that they looked with envy as I gave it to the animals; and had I not firmly opposed their longing, would, I believe, have helped themselves.

"If this is the poisonous root, will it stupefy the animals, or cause them pain?" asked Fritz.

"There are two chief qualities of poison in these plants," I replied. "One, which is painful in the extreme, produces effects quickly, like those of arsenic: the other either stupefies, or creates unnatural excitement, like opium, producing lingering disorders, which eventually end in death. They are therefore described as slow poisons."

I noticed with satisfaction that the fowls were eagerly eating up the crumbs, and that Master Nip was devouring his piece of the cake with great rapidity.

"What do they call this bread in America, papa?" asked Fritz presently.

"At the Antilles, where the root is chiefly found, they call it cassava-bread," I replied. — "But see, my dear," I continued, addressing my wife, "the animals have eaten it all, and we must begin our baking performances early to-morrow morning, if we find that our cassava tasters are not the worse for what they have eaten."

We seated ourselves to partake of supper on the benches and at the table which I had constructed with planks on the fig-tree roots. The potatoes were excellent; and, although the flesh of the penguin was fishy in taste and rather tough, it was, after all, not so bad as we had feared. We could once more thank God for his benefits as we retired, with appeased appetites, to our castle on the tree.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PINNACE AND THE PETARD.

FINDING that the fowls and the monkey were as lively as ever next morning, we set eagerly to work to bake for ourselves, and in good time had a large store of bread in our possession. The boys were so proud of their performances, that each ate his own cakes for breakfast; and certainly, with butter, I could almost fancy myself eating hot rolls in our own dear country. A large bowl of new milk added to our meal made it a fit repast for a king.

During breakfast I expressed my strong desire to pay another visit to the wreck with the boys, that we might endeavor by our united efforts to manage the pinnace which we had discovered on the previous day.

The good mother was not to be convinced, at first, that any thing could make it necessary for me to venture again on the treacherous sea; but she at length consented, on condition that I would on no account remain another night on the wreck.

On arriving there, I advised the boys to load both the raft and the boat with the things that came first to hand, so that at least we might not return empty, and I hastened to have one more look at the pinnace.

I contrived to creep within the enclosure; and, by means of the feeble light from two narrow slits in the wooden partition, discovered, to my great satisfaction,

that each piece of the vessel being carefully laid in its proper place and, above all, numbered, it could be rebuilt with ease and correctness.

So many difficulties, however, presented themselves, that, but for the strong desire I felt to have in my possession such a beautiful little vessel, it is more than probable I should not have attempted the undertaking. I was convinced that, with patience and perseverance, we should be able to reconstruct the pinnace; and I decided to put it together, with the help of my boys, in the hope that some means for launching it would be suggested to me.

The evening arrived before any thing could be done, and we returned home with our load. What was our surprise and pleasure, on reaching Safety Bay, to see the mother and little Frank on the shore waiting to receive us! "We are going to remain at Tent House," said my wife, "until you have cleared the wreck. It will be a shorter voyage for you, and we shall be constantly within sight of each other."

I knew how little my brave wife liked residing at Tent House; and I was glad to be able to reward her self-denial by placing before her the articles we had brought with us, — two casks of butter, three of flour, a case of corn and rice, with a number of other useful articles, for our storehouse.

A week was occupied with our voyages to the wreck. We started early every morning, and returned home in the evening, heavily laden.

During our absence my wife and little Frank visited Falcon's Nest frequently, to look after the poultry and bring away potatoes from the field close by. When we met in the evening, we had plenty to talk about as

we enjoyed the excellent suppers provided from her stores.

The pinnace was at last ready to be set free from her prison. Her appearance was neat and elegant. She had a tiller at her prow, and a small quarter-deck on which to raise a mast and sail like a cutter, and, being of a light build, would not draw much water. We had carefully calked all the joints and openings, and covered them with pitch or ship's tar. On the quarter-deck we placed two little cannon, securing them with chains in the usual manner on board ship.

There sat the beautiful thing, immovable in its prison, yet impatient to dart into the sea, and to carry its masts and spread its sails on the bosom of the ocean. The thought that a storm might arise, and destroy it with the wreck, led me to determine upon a great risk, but I said nothing of my intention to the boys.

I filled an iron mortar, which had been found in the steward's room, with gunpowder, and covered it securely with the end of a stout plank, in which I cut a groove and laid a train of gunpowder. Then, having contrived a fuse, which I thought would burn for an hour before reaching the powder, I calked every crevice with tar, and bound the whole together with chains.

This terrible instrument, a kind of petard, I suspended in the enclosure occupied by the pinnace, on the side from which I calculated, as carefully as possible, that the recoil of an explosion would set our little craft free, yet without injury to it. Giving the boys the order to go on board our tub-boat, I returned, lighted the fuse, and hastily embarking, steered away from the wreck.

We had arrived at Tent House, and were unloading the raft, when a sudden and frightful noise on the sea, like

the roar of cannon, so alarmed my wife and boys that they screamed in terror.

"The sound came from the sea!" exclaimed my wife. "And look at the smoke! I hope, dear husband, you have not left fire near the powder!"

"There is nothing of that sort to fear," I said. "I think the explosion has something to do with the pinnace. — Boys, I must go back and see what has happened: who will go with me?"

Without a word the boys sprang into the boat, while I remained for a moment to explain the matter to my wife.

I saw with satisfaction that the form and position of the vessel remained unchanged. With a light heart I steered to the other side and there discovered the destruction caused by my petard. A large portion of the ship's side had been shattered, and the fragments floated on the water; while through the opening which yawned upon us we could see the unhurt pinnace.

"It is won!" cried I: "the beautiful pinnace is ours!"

We climbed through the opening, and found, to our great delight, that it would be easy, with the aid of a pulley and lever, to push the pinnace from the wreck, as, while reconstructing it, I had taken the precaution to place rollers under the keel.

When all was ready, we threw our united strength into the performance, and saw her glide slowly into the sea. We wished to surprise the mother and little Frank with her wonderful appearance, so leaving her safe on the side of the wreck farthest from the shore, we returned to Tent House.

When all was ready, my boys obtained permission, as a reward for their industry, to salute their mamma, as we

entered the bay, by firing our two guns. Fritz was captain; and Ernest and Jack, at his command, put their matches to the guns, and fired. My wife and little boy rushed out in alarm, but our joyful shouts re-assured them; and they were ready to welcome us with astonishment and delight. Fritz placed a plank from the pinnace to the shore, and assisted his mother to come on board. They gave her a new salute, and christened the vessel *The Elizabeth.*

Mooring the little fleet safely, we followed the river to the cascade, where we saw a neat garden laid out in beds and walks. "This is my work and Frank's," explained my wife. "We found the earth soft enough for us to dig and prepare. Here," she continued, "I have planted potatoes; yonder are fresh cassava-roots; on the other side I have sowed lettuce and salad-seeds, and near them have left a space for you to plant with reeds and bamboo-canes."

Leading us farther on, and pointing to another division, she said, "This will be our fruit-garden. Farther on, I have sowed a quantity of each sort of grain which you brought from the vessel; and above, in a shelf of the rock, have planted roots of the ananas, because their clinging tendrils will form a shade for the young shoots. Water," she added, "can be easily brought from the neighboring waterfall: and there is no doubt that the plants will grow and thrive."

"You have performed wonders, dear wife!" I exclaimed, after we had examined the fruitful spot; and then, as the sunset was approaching, we unloaded our vessels, fixed our pinnace to the shore, by means of a rope from the bow, and took the road to Falcon's Nest.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WALK TO THE CALABASH-WOOD.

WHILE daily visiting the wreck, we passed the second Sunday of our stay upon the island, and honored it with earnest devotion.

I did not attempt much in the form of preaching, but my hearers were interested in the Bible-reading with the instruction I drew from it, and their young voices joined sweetly in favorite hymns which my wife sang from memory.

After our mid-day meal, I desired my boys to let me see what dexterity they had acquired in athletic sports, such as leaping, running, wrestling, and climbing, which I considered essential both for their bodily strength, and for giving confidence in times of threatened danger. Nothing makes a man so timid and fearful as a want of confidence in his physical strength.

In addition to these exercises, I advised my boys to practise running up and down the rope-ladder that led to our sleeping-room in the tree, and also to learn to raise themselves by a loose rope, which I suspended from the balcony, as the sailors do on board ship. I made knots here and there in the rope at first; but, after a little practice, they managed to climb and descend with very few knots, and, at last, hand over hand and with legs crossed, as sailors do, on a smooth rope and without assistance.

While this was going on, I prepared another weapon for

their use. I began by tying a bullet to each end of a piece of rope about six feet long, and in a few minutes the boys were all around me, eagerly inquiring what I was doing, and whether it would be something useful.

"You shall see me use it presently," I replied. "I am trying to make a weapon called the lasso, used by the Mexicans and settlers in South America. They swing the end of it, in which a stone is tied, round or over their heads, while holding the other end in the hand, and throw it with such power and swiftness, that the animal they wish to capture is caught by the flying rope, which twists around its body and limbs, and renders it unable to move. The Mexicans are so skilful with the lasso, that they will throw it while on horseback, and they seldom fail in securing their prey alive, or in killing it."

I made a trial of the lasso on the stump of a not far distant tree, and the rope wrapped itself about the tree so securely, that the boys were more eager than ever to try the new weapon. I therefore prepared one for each of the boys and set them at work. Fritz was soon skilful in throwing it, and I encouraged the rest to persevere in acquiring the same facility, as the weapon might be invaluable to us when our ammunition failed.

On looking out the next morning, I saw that the sea was too much agitated for any expedition in the boats, and therefore turned to home employments. We looked over our stores for winter provision. My wife showed me a cask of ortolans she had preserved in butter, and a quantity of loaves of cassava-bread carefully prepared. She pointed out that the pigeons had built in the tree and were sitting on their eggs. We also looked over the young fruit-trees brought from Europe, and my sons and I laid out a piece of ground, and planted them.

The day passed in these employments; and as we had lived only upon potatoes, cassava-bread, and milk, we determined to go next morning in pursuit of game to recruit our larder. At dawn we all started, including little Francis and his mother, who wished to take this opportunity of seeing a little more of the country. I harnessed the ass to the sledge which contained our provision for the day, and was to bring back the products of the chase. Turk, accoutred in his coat-of-mail, formed the advanced guard; my sons followed with their guns; then came my wife with Francis leading the ass; and at a little distance I closed the procession, with Master Nips mounted on the patient Floss.

Our road lay through Flamingo Marsh, and my wife and the younger boys, who had not seen the place before, exclaimed with admiration at every turn. Fritz, eager for a hunting adventure, soon disappeared, and we were presently startled by the noisy bark of the dog, as an enormous bird rose in the air. A shot from Fritz brought it instantly to the ground; but it was not dead, and with incredible strength it beat its wings with rage, scattering the dust as it ran, with Turk following.

Floss, who could not look on without wishing to take part in the fray, threw her little monkey rider from her back to join in the chase. Quick as lightning she caught the bird, and held it fast till Fritz came up; but the kicks it gave the dogs were so violent, that Turk slunk away, and Fritz was obliged to wait until I could reach them. The captive was a magnificent bustard.

Anxious to secure the bird without killing it, I threw my handkerchief over its head, then hastened to tie the legs together, and after releasing the wounded wing from the jaws of Floss, I tied another handkerchief over both

wings and body. I wished to preserve it alive in the hope of taming it as an addition to our farm-yard. Without delay, we carried it to our impatient and curious travelling-companions, placed it on the sledge, and resumed our journey to the cocoanut-wood in which little Nip's mother had been killed by the dogs.

Ernest, a little in advance of the rest, quickly reached the wood. He stopped suddenly, as he espied the beautiful clusters of nuts which hung from the higher branches of a magnificent cocoa-palm. "Oh, how terribly high the nuts are! I wish I had one!" he exclaimed.

Hardly had he uttered the words when a nut fell heavily at his feet from the wonderful tree. A second followed, as much to my astonishment as his, for they were scarcely ripe, and it was impossible to suppose they had fallen on account of decay. "Why, papa!" cried the boy, "this is just like a fairy-tale. No sooner is a wish formed in the mind than it is granted."

"Our good fairy is probably seated on the tree in the form of an ape," I replied, "who is more interested to pelt us with nuts than to supply dainties for our table."

Cautiously the boy picked up the nuts, and brought them to me. Presently two more fell, and Fritz, who, with his mother and the rest, had joined us, cried, "I have discovered him, papa, a horribly hideous creature, as large as my hat, with two enormous claws like a crab. See! he is coming down the tree."

Slowly and steadily it glided down the trunk of the tree; but before it could reach the ground, Jack struck at it with the butt-end of his gun. He failed, however, to injure it, and the animal sprang to the ground, and with gaping claws marched towards his assailant.

The little fellow defended himself bravely; but all his

strokes failed to reach the animal, who jumped aside, and avoided them with wonderful dexterity. At last the boy stood still, removed his knapsack and arms, took off his jacket, held it extended in both hands, advanced cautiously towards his adversary, and suddenly threw it over the animal; then, kneeling on the ground, rested his whole weight upon it, and, wrapping the jacket completely round the creature's body, began thumping violently with his fists the strange bundle, in which performance he exerted his whole strength. I seized the hatchet, and with a few strokes put an end to the monster crab.

"Well," cried Jack, "that is a disgusting, ugly animal! What is it, papa?"

"This bold gentleman is the cocoanut-crab. He lives upon the nuts, the shells of which he opens as much by skill as strength, and is no mean adversary for a boy to meet and conquer."

For some time we proceeded on our journey very slowly, on account of a thick growth of underwood, and the tendrils of creeping plants. Several times we had to stop, and with an axe cut a way for the ass and sledge. Ernest at length made the agreeable discovery that a kind of liquid oozed from the divided ends of the tendrils that was pure and drinkable.

The boys eagerly gathered a large quantity, and I showed them how to obtain the liquid more plentifully, by making an incision at each end, as we had done with the sugar-canes. We soon had enough, both for ourselves and the animals.

After pushing on for some distance through the thicket, we came to a clearing, and saw before us, near the seashore, the beautiful calabash-trees, forming a sheltering wood. The splendid trees and their singular fruit

excited great wonder and surprise, and I hastened to explain the varied forms of the gourds, and also how easily we could make from them a good supply of the vessels and different articles we needed.

Fritz repeated all the history of our former attempts, and cut some gourds to make his mother some egg-baskets, and a large spoon for skimming milk. We sat down under the shade and took some refreshment; and afterwards, while we all worked at making baskets, bowls, and flasks, Ernest, who had no taste for such labor, explored the wood. Suddenly we saw him running to us in great terror, crying, "A wild boar, papa; a great, wild boar!" Fritz and I seized our guns and ran to the spot he pointed out, the dogs preceding us.

We soon heard barking and loud grunting, which proved that the combat had begun, and, hoping for a good prize, we hastened forward; when what was our vexation to find the dogs holding by the ears, not a wild boar, but our own great sow, whose wild and intractable disposition had induced her to leave us and live in the woods! We could not but laugh at our disappointment, and I made the dogs release the poor sow, who immediately resumed her feast on a small fruit, which had fallen from the trees and tempted the voracious beast to this spot. I took up one of these apples, and found the contents to be of a rich and juicy nature, but did not venture to taste it till we had put it to the usual test. We collected a quantity, I even broke a loaded branch from the tree, and we returned to our party.

Jack, who was in advance of us, had scrambled up a rocky mound at a little distance; but no sooner had he reached the summit than he stood still with a horror-stricken face, as if unable to move, and exclaimed, — "Papa, papa, a crocodile, a crocodile!"

"A crocodile!" I replied. "What, so far from the water as this? That would indeed be singular." As I spoke, however, we all rushed to the spot; and I immediately recognized a kind of large lizard, named the Iguana, much esteemed as delicate eating in the West Indies. "This will be a prize," I exclaimed to the boys, "if we can capture this creature as a present for your mother."

Fritz raised his gun to fire, but I checked him. "Steady, my boy," I said. "You must not be so rash. Your shot would most likely only wound the animal without killing him, for these creatures have a wonderful tenacity of life. We must use other means to capture our booty."

I cut a strong switch, and fastened to the end of it a string with a slip-knot. In my left hand I carried a large dry branch of a tree, and slowly approached the sleeping animal. As I drew nearer, I whistled softly, increasing in loudness by degrees. The sleeper presently awoke and raised his head to listen, and perhaps to see whence the sound came. I approached with caution, near enough to pass my slip-knot round his neck, still continuing to whistle. The task was not difficult, for the animal appeared so infatuated with the music, that I succeeded in throwing the cord and tightening the knot round his neck, and made him my captive with ease. I dragged him to the foot of the rock, turned him over on his back to kill him more speedily, and, firmly piercing the nostril with my switch, instant death followed.

We could not think of leaving such valuable booty behind us, and, as our sledge was a long way off, I resolved to carry the creature on my back, the boys following to support the tail, for the weight was enormous.

We chose the shortest way to the mother and Frank, but, long before we reached them, heard our names called

in tones of anxiety. Our long absence had alarmed them, because there had not been the usual firing; but, when we replied to them cheerfully, all trouble was forgotten. Many questions were asked, and so much had to be related, that we began to feel hungry. It was impossible to prepare a portion of the iguana for dinner, and we were obliged to content ourselves with the cold provisions we had brought from Falcon's Nest. Master Nip had eaten so eagerly one of the apples which I offered him, that I readily gave the boys the permission they desired; and never, I believe, was fruit so thoroughly enjoyed. The ape, not satisfied with those we gave him, found our store, and stole several. Even the bustard, which we had tied by the leg to a tree, came the length of his string to seize an apple which we threw to him.

I came to the conclusion at last that we had discovered a West Indian fruit named Guava; it was so full of juice, that it supplied the place of water, and our thirst was greatly relieved. Altogether, the frugal meal greatly refreshed and strengthened us, and, as the day was far advanced, my wife proposed that we should prepare to turn our steps homeward, and I readily agreed to her suggestion.

We started on a direct road to Falcon's Nest, and presently entered a wood of majestic oaks, beneath which lay a quantity of acorns, on which the bustard fed with great eagerness. Before sunset we were at home; and a piece of the iguana's flesh, baked, with potatoes and roasted acorns, formed our supper, after which, with thankful hearts, we retired to rest in our aerial chamber, and slept soundly till morning.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CANADIAN FOWL AND THE INDIA-RUBBER-TREE.

FRITZ and I started next morning with the ass to bring home the sledge and the remainder of the gourd-vessels. On arriving at the wood of oaks, we found the sow peacefully feeding on the acorns with a good appetite, none the worse for the attack upon her and not in the least shy or wild.

While passing through the wood, we heard at a little distance a most singular noise, somewhat like the sound of a muffled drum. Creeping softly through the bushes which concealed the spot, we came upon an open space in which lay the partly-decayed trunk of a tree, and upon it stood a beautiful bird, of about the size of a domestic cock, having round his neck a magnificent collar of variegated feathers, and making the most ridiculous grimaces and antics. At first he twisted himself round and round, rolled his eyes as if he were possessed, then ruffled the feathers of his collar, producing by the movement a strange noise; then he spread his tail in the form of a fan, and beat his wings with such velocity that a mist, like a cloud, seemed to envelope him. It was evidently this beating of the wings which produced the sound of the muffled drum. This droll little performer was surrounded by a number of others, exactly like himself, but without the feathered ruff round the neck: they were assembled, without doubt, to witness his antics, with which they seemed to be greatly delighted.

All this so excited my curiosity, that I had determined to wait and see the end of the play; when an unexpected shot fired by Fritz suddenly put an end to the comedy.

The inspired drummer fell from the stage and lay stretched in the sand, and the scared feathered audience took to flight.

I could not refrain from reproving Fritz for his rashness; and, by so doing, greatly lessened his pride in having aimed so correctly. However, as the creature was really dead, and on examination proved to be a valuable prize, I overlooked the eagerness of the sportsman.

The morning was by this time far advanced, and I found it necessary to hasten our proposed excursion to the chain of rocks, to discover if possible whether we were on the inner land of an extensive promontory, or on an island surrounded by the ocean. We passed a small brook, large plantations of manihot or cassava, and potatoes, and farther on a grove of trees, from the branches of which hung curious clusters of berries exactly like wax. We picked several, and found that the warmth of our hands made them stick to our fingers.

"Are they of any use, papa?" asked Fritz. "They do not seem to be good to eat."

"They are not useful as food; but what if we should be able to make wax candles for our winter evenings?" This prospect greatly pleased Fritz; and he gladly assisted me in gathering as many berries as we could get into a sack for the ass to carry.

We had not proceeded far, when we came upon a singular-looking object, built around the trunk of a tree, and

This singular bird is a native of Canada, called by some naturalists *Tetrao tympanum;* but it is better known by the name of the *ruffed grouse.*

looking like a large umbrella. I saw at once that the formation consisted of a great number of nests, built, at the point on the tree from which the lower branches sprung, by a colony of birds, who appeared to be living together in great harmony. Each pair had its own nest: in fact, this curious construction was like a town full of houses, all under one roof, formed of straw and moss, and sloping down from the trunk of the tree like the cover of an umbrella. The branches of the tree overshadowed and partly concealed the colonial residence, enabling the little creatures to slip in and out of their nest-entrances without attracting much attention.

WAX-BEARING PLANT.

The number, also, of the feathered inhabitants greatly astonished me; for they took alarm at our approach, and flew around us, chattering angrily, and evidently ready to repel by thousands of beaks any attack on their community.

While observing with admiration this wonderful proof

The birds who live in this sociable manner, and unite in building such a wonderful residence, are on this account sometimes called *umbrella birds*.

of bird instinct, I was surprised to see a species of small parrot enter some of the nests, causing a great commotion among the colonists. Fritz, who very much wished to secure a living parrot, threw his gun on the ground, and climbed the tree. On reaching the nearest branch, he seized it with one hand, while he thrust the other into the nearest nest-opening: it was empty. He tried another, with the same result. The third time he was rewarded for his boldness as a nest-robber; for, while feeling the soft feathers of birds in the nest, a hard seed-cracking beak seized his finger, and obliged him quickly to withdraw his hand, and cry out with pain as he shook it in the air. But he had not lost his hold on the bough, and thrusting his hand again into the nest and seizing the lovely biter, he brought him out in spite of his screams.

Fritz was highly delighted with his prize, which proved to be a kind of sparrow-parrot, with beautiful green plumage. He placed it in his pocket to take home, and teach to talk.

As we continued our journey, our conversation naturally turned on the social instinct of these birds, and the skill they displayed in building. Fritz asked if there were other creatures with similar powers, and if it could be the result of instinct.

"Beavers," I replied, "build quite a village, in which a large number live together in great sociability. Bees, wasps, and ants, also, possess this social instinct strongly."

"Ah, yes, papa, I have watched the ants. It is a most amusing sight."

"If the ants of our native country have interested you," I said, "what would be your astonishment at those of other lands! They build for their eggs a kind of oven or nest, from four to six feet high, and nearly as broad, with

walls and roof so hard that neither rain nor sunshine can penetrate it. In it are streets, galleries, vaults, and store-cellars, and it is so firmly built that with little change it might be used as a baking-oven for man."

While conversing thus, we reached some trees quite unknown to us. They were from forty to sixty feet in height, and from the bark, which was cracked in some places, issued balls of thick gum. It was with difficulty that Fritz got one of them off. He tried to soften it with his hand as we proceeded on our journey, but found that heat only gave it the power of extension, and that on being released it resumed its first form.

"Look, papa!" he exclaimed, "I am sure the trees we took for wild figs are caoutchouc-trees, and that this is india-rubber."

"That would be a valuable discovery to us," I replied.

"Why, can any use be made of the rubber except to remove pencil-marks?"

"Oh, yes! the sap of the caoutchouc-tree is used for very many articles that will be of great service to us."

We now reached the cocoanut-wood, and it occurred to me to look for one of those most valuable trees called the sago-palm. I noticed presently a large trunk broken down by the wind, in which I found sap of a floury nature exactly resembling European sago. A grove of sugar-canes lay in our homeward way, and, not to return empty-handed, we gathered a large bundle of the sweet dainty, not forgetting to refresh ourselves with them also.

CHAPTER XVII.

CANDLE-MAKING.—THE NEW CART.

"CANDLE-MAKING to-day!" exclaimed the boys when they rose next morning; and they gave me no rest till I promised to attempt to make candles of the wax-plant berries.

We filled a sauce-pan, and placing it over the fire produced in a little time a considerable quantity of beautiful, green wax. While melting the berries, we prepared a number of wicks from threads of sail-cloth, dipped them quickly and carefully in the wax, then hung them in the air to dry. This operation we repeated two or three times, till the wicks had taken sufficient wax to form candles, which, although they were far inferior in roundness and size to those at home, threw around us such a clear, bright light, that we were overjoyed with the result.

There would be no occasion now for us to go to bed at sunset, for this light would serve us in our tree-castle apartment in a most convenient manner.

This success encouraged me to make an attempt of another description. Among the articles on board ship, we found no churn, and I therefore resolved to try a plan, a description of which I had read. I chose the largest of our calabash-bottles, and, after filling it half full of cream, closed it tightly. I then placed four stakes in the ground, tied to them a piece of sail-cloth by the four

corners, and laid the bottle upon it. At each side I stationed one of the boys, and desired him to roll it backwards and forwards, by alternately raising the cloth, so as to keep it in constant agitation. This performance proved capital fun; and the boys kept it up with jokes and laughter for more than half an hour, when I opened the bottle, and found, to our great joy, that some really good butter had been churned.

Another and much more difficult undertaking was on my mind, which for a long time had seemed impracticable. The sledge was not only inconvenient but very heavy for our animals to draw; and, as we had brought four cart-wheels from the wreck, I wished to construct a little cart.

I determined to try what I could do, and after some difficulty succeeded in constructing a sort of carriage, which, though not elegant in appearance, would, I knew, be very useful.

In the mean time my family at Tent House were employed, daily, in planting the European fruit-trees which I had brought from the wreck. The vines were placed near the arched roots, for they required air and a shady place; but the oranges, citrons, the shaddock, the pistachio-nut, mulberries, medlars, olives, cherries, and other fruits containing kernels, were planted on the way to the bridge over the Jackal River, where they could obtain light and warmth.

I wished also to make the rocks at Tent House a kind of fortification, as all our ammunition lay there. I resolved, therefore, to choose two slight elevations near the river, on

Shaddock: A kind of orange nearly as large as a child's head.

Medlar: A top-shaped fruit, of about the size of a pear, eaten only when partially decayed.

which to fix the two cannon from the pinnace, and also to plant a thick hedge of thorns around the whole spot.

These engagements employed us for six weeks; but the hard work had completely worn out our clothes, and this, with other important reasons, made me consider it necessary to return once more to the wreck. I wished, if possible, to bring away one or two more of the cannon, to place on the heights of our fortification.

On the first fine day, I set out in the pinnace for the wreck with the three elder boys. We found every thing as we had left it; but the wind and waves had loosened the beams, and damaged the powder-casks. The sailors' chests were in tolerably good condition, and these we placed on board the pinnace, as well as a box containing a quantity of ball and shot, and two small cannon.

On the second trip, we towed our tub-boat behind the pinnace, quickly loading it with planks, doors, window-shutters, locks and bolts, and as many other precious things as we could possibly carry. At last, when it seemed as if we had plundered the wreck of every useful article, I resolved to blow it up with gunpowder, in the hope that the wind and the waves would cast on shore wood and beams, as well as other articles suitable for house-building, which were too heavy for us to bring away in our boats. I had discovered a large heavy copper caldron, which I thought might be saved, and I attached it to two empty casks strong enough to support it when launched into the sea.

When ready to start, I rolled a powder-barrel into the hold of the ship, fastened to it carefully the end of a fusee, and, after lighting it, sprang into the boat, where the boys were already seated, and with outspread sail hastened towards the shore.

We had scarcely reached the bay, when a roar as of majestic thunder resounded from the rocks, and at the same moment a brilliant column of fire, rising into the air, announced that my plan had succeeded. A feeling of sadness came over me: it seemed as if the last tie that bound us to our dear home was broken; and when my wife and Frank, in great alarm, met us as we landed, she and the boys seemed overcome with the same sad feeling. It was as if we had lost in the ship an old and dear friend.

A night's rest enabled us to shake off all feelings of regret, especially when we saw that the beach was strewn with wooden planks and beams, while, on the sea near the shore, floated broken fragments of all descriptions, and amongst them the copper caldron, floating between the two casks to which I had fastened it. Many days were employed in collecting all these useful articles, in piling them on the shore, and in covering the powder-casks with earth and moss, till we could store them at Tent House.

My wife, in assisting us with the wreck, made the agreeable discovery that two of our ducks and one goose had each hatched a brood, and were leading their noisy young families to the water. This reminded us of our domestic comforts at Falcon's Nest, and we determined to defer the rest of our work at Tent House, and to return the next day to our shady summer-home.

On our way I observed that the newly-planted fruit-trees were beginning to droop, and I resolved to proceed to Cape Disappointment the next morning, to cut bamboos to make props for them. We started in high spirits from Falcon's Nest, and I led my household by the newly-discovered road to the plantations of potatoes, manihot, and cassava-roots, through which Fritz and I had passed, and

at length reached the bird-colony-tree and the spot where I had been entertained with the performances of the Canadian grouse.

The wax-berry-tree soon came in sight, and the boys eagerly gathered berries enough to fill two sacks, which were stowed away safely in a spot we should pass on our way home. When we reached the india-rubber-tree, I made several incisions in the bark, from which the gum oozed freely and soon filled all our little vessels. These also were left for our homeward journey, and we continued to advance till we reached the cocoanut-wood, and, leaving it on the left, presently arrived at an open spot situated between the grove of sugar-canes and the bamboo-bushes, which lay at a little distance beyond. Here we paused to admire a beautiful landscape, which lay stretched out before us. On our left was the sugar-cane-grove, to the right the bamboos, and before us a splendid avenue of palm-trees; Cape Disappointment could be seen beyond, stretching out into the deep sea.

We felt inclined to remove from Falcon's Nest, and take up our abode here; but the safety of our night-castle in the great tree, and other advantages which we enjoyed at Falcon's Nest, made us decide to remain at the dear old home.

We determined, however, to make a halt for our mid-day meal. The animals were unharnessed from the cart, and set at liberty to graze on the rich pasture, and we produced from our store of provisions enough for a slight repast for ourselves, then set to work to cut down and tie together bamboo and sugar-canes, in bundles of a size suitable for placing on the cart. The boys cast longing eyes on the cocoanuts, and Fritz and Jack attempted to climb the trees; but the trunk was too large and too

smooth for them, and, sliding to the ground, they measured, with discouraged eyes, the height of the smooth and polished stem.

In this dilemma I produced rough pads of the shark's skin, and, after fastening them to their arms and knees, told them to try again, as the rough surface would enable them to rest and take breath while clinging to the stem with their knees.

Fritz and Jack made the attempt, and soon reached the crown of the tree. Each took an axe from his leathern girdle and struck so bravely the clusters of cocoanuts, that they fell to the ground like hail. The boys were almost beside themselves with delight, and, coming down, received our congratulations that this wonderful gymnastic performance had turned out so well.

Ernest, who had not taken part in it, was soon seen climbing a tree on which no fruit grew. In response to a laugh from his brothers, he took his axe from his girdle, and with one or two strokes cut off the large, delicately-formed leaves from the crown. "I have thrown down to you a beautiful palm-cabbage," he cried, "twenty times more agreeable to eat than cocoanuts. This tree is the vegetable palm."

"The boy is right," I exclaimed as I examined a leaf, "and it is very wholesome food. It grows on the top of the tree." Ernest had asked the loan of a cocoanut-shell from his mother before going up, and, when he descended to the ground, he drew a small flask from his pocket, and poured from it into the empty shell something which he presented to me, saying, "It is palm-wine, sir."

"You are right," I replied, "and I drink to your health and the success of your discovery."

As the day was now far advanced, we resolved to remain

for the night in this charming spot, and to build a little cabin of branches and leaves to protect ourselves from the cold wind and the dew. I had brought with me a piece of sail-cloth, with which we could cover our little hut, and protect it from the night air.

While thus engaged, we were startled by the extraordinary behavior of the ass. He was grazing peacefully near the spot, when suddenly he began to spring and leap, raising his nose in the air as if he were in the midst of fire and flame, then, uttering a dreadful *he-haw*, he started off at full gallop. Unfortunately, the dogs were absent, and the ass disappeared among the bamboo-bushes while we were summoning them. We followed for a long distance, but with no success, and further search was deferred till the morrow.

This circumstance alarmed me, for I could only account for the poor animal's excitement by the probable approach of wild beasts. I determined, that, after gathering dry grass and moss for our beds, large fires and torches should be lighted to surround our cabin. These torches were easily made of dry sugar-canes, about five or six feet long, which gave a brilliant light, and would continue burning for many hours.

We laid ourselves down on the soft beds of grass and moss which the boys had collected, with loaded guns close at hand in case of danger. For a time I kept awake to replenish the fire, and keep the torches lighted; but as hour after hour passed, and no wild beasts appeared, I gradually sank into a refreshing sleep, and did not wake till the mother announced that breakfast was ready.

During this meal we laid our plans for the day's work. I had hoped that the night-fires and lights would have attracted the donkey to return; but as he did not

appear, I resolved to take one of the boys and the two dogs, and search for the fugitive through the bamboo-grove, returning to the hut before evening. To Jack's great delight, I chose him for my companion, and, as the dogs were to go with us, left the elder boys to protect their mother and little Frank, and also to collect sugar-canes, palm-wine, and cocoanuts, that we might return to Falcon's Nest on the following day.

With the help of the dogs, we were able to follow the donkey's tracks till they led us to the shores of a large bay, into which flowed a pleasant river, the promontory to our right forming its boundary by a ridge of rocks.

We climbed the cliffs, and found, to the left on the other side, a rushing river which overflowed its banks. Its bed was so deep, and the rush of its waters so rapid, that we found with difficulty a place we could venture to wade through. I found with pleasure the print of hoofs, but, as the marks became more numerous, some were larger than others and of a different shape, and as we went on, I imagined I could discern, quite in the distance, a herd of animals.

All traces of the hoofs of the ass were lost in the grass; but I resolved to approach these unknown animals as closely as possible, to find out if the fugitive was in their company. They moved on, grazing on the river-banks, and we followed, concealed by the grove of canes through which we passed.

At last, after struggling through this grove, we came suddenly upon a herd of buffaloes, grazing within a distance of about thirty or forty paces. The dogs were within call; and the buffaloes, unaccustomed to the sight of human beings, merely stood still, and stared at us wonderingly.

This circumstance no doubt saved our lives, for we had time to load our guns, and to draw back a little, as I had no wish for an affray with such formidable beasts. We were about to retire cautiously and prudently, when the dogs unfortunately reached the spot, and were seen by the buffaloes.

Instantly they began to bellow, paw the ground with

BUFFALO.

their feet, and lower their horned heads, in preparation for an attack. I saw with a shudder, that they were about to attack the dogs, who, fearless of danger, threw themselves boldly upon a young buffalo, half a dozen paces in advance of the others, and, seizing it by the ears, dragged it towards us. With beating hearts, Jack and I raised our guns, and fired. The noise, the flash, and the smoke were like a thunder-clap to the terrified

beasts, and to our great joy they turned and fled. One only remained, a female, and evidently the mother of the young buffalo which our dogs had seized.

She had been wounded by the shot from my gun; and the pain made her so furious, that she lost all fear, and, in her eagerness to save her calf, threw herself upon the dogs, whose fate would have been sealed, had I not quickly raised my gun, and with a second shot brought her to the ground. After this I felt able to breathe again, for we had been indeed near death; and eagerly I praised Jack for his presence of mind, and for being so ready with his gun. Yet we had still work before us, for the young buffalo struggled violently, and fought with his feet so fiercely, that I feared he would injure the dogs — and yet I knew not how to help them.

Jack, however, bethought himself of his sling, drew it from his pocket, and swung it so skilfully round the animal's hind legs, that it fell to the ground, and we were then able to approach nearer, and tie them together, and also to release his ears from the hold of the dogs.

There was now but one way in which we could hope to lead our captive home, for I hoped to tame him after a time, as he was evidently very young. I made the dogs hold down his head, while with a sharp penknife I pierced a hole through the nostril, passed a string through it to form a leading-rein, then untied his legs, and set him at liberty, still holding the rein. He attempted at first to escape; but the pain caused by the string in his nostril checked him, and at length he not only allowed himself to be led, but followed me in the most docile manner.

I was anxious to carry away portions of the flesh of the dead buffalo, not forgetting to cut out the tongue, which, when salted, is considered a great delicacy. We left the

rest for the dogs, who fell upon it with eager appetite; but their feast was soon interrupted by a flock of vultures and other birds, who approached from all points, and struggled with them for the prey; and, as neither side would give way, they all commenced eating together with extraordinary voracity. I recognized among the birds the royal vulture and the condor, so called on account of the strange outgrowth on the upper part of his beak. Jack

CONDOR.

longed to send a few shots amongst them; but I restrained him, for I knew that birds that feed on carrion are not good for food.

I became anxious now to reach home, and, as it was too late to search farther for the ass, we proceeded directly to the palm-grove, where the family were no doubt anxiously awaiting us.

The poor buffalo, to avoid the movement of the cord

in his nostrils, which gave him pain, followed so tamely that we were able at last to lay our booty on his back, and, after a little trouble, induce him to carry it without opposition.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BABY-JACKAL.

BEFORE reaching the palm-grove we met with another adventure which must be related.

While between the river and the ridge of rocks, in a narrow defile, a jackal started out of its hole in front of us. Both dogs flew at it instantly, and, though it fought desperately, it was quickly overpowered. The animal's courage convinced me that it was a mother defending her young. I allowed Jack to creep into the dark place, and

he soon emerged, bringing in his arms a handsome cub of a beautiful gold-yellow color, and about the size of a small cat. Floss and Turk had followed him, and this was the only one he had been able to save alive.

I readily acceded to his request that he might take it home and tame it, bringing it up, as he said, to follow him like a dog, and be useful in the chase.

During this affair I had tied the young buffalo to a tree, which I found was a dwarf vegetable palm, with sharp pointed leaves, and which, if planted thickly at Tent House, would form an excellent hedge for our fortifications.

We found our way back to the road; but night was approaching before we reached the palm-grove, where we were received with shouts of joy. Question after question had to be answered, when they saw our buffalo and the baby-jackal as well as the store of provisions we had brought. Jack described our adventures in a most spirited manner, and was listened to with such eager curiosity, that I had scarcely time before supper to ask what they had all been doing in our absence.

They informed me at last that they had visited Cape Disappointment, gathered wood for the night, made new torches, and cut down a large palm, which they believed to be the sago-palm. Fritz had discovered a young eaglet, which Ernest pronounced a Malabar or Indian eagle. As these birds are easily tamed, he hoped to train him to bring down birds in the chase like a hawk.

During their absence, however, the hut had been invaded by a troop of monkeys, which had drunk up all the palm-wine from the calabash-bowls, scattered the potatoes, stolen the cocoanuts, and so damaged the hut, that my young people, on their return from the hill, were more than an hour employed in repairing it.

The young buffalo was fed with potatoes softened in milk, and to our great satisfaction the cow received him in a most friendly manner, when we tied him up near her. Jack gave his little jackal some bread and milk, and, the dogs having taken their posts as watchers, we lighted the torches, intending to wake at the proper time and relight them if they went out. But on laying ourselves down to rest, we were in a short time too soundly asleep to be disturbed till sunrise by any such arrangement.

After a light breakfast, I was about to give the signal for starting, when I observed that my young people had some project in their heads which rendered them unwilling to leave so early.

"What is this secret?" I asked of my wife.

"The boys," she replied, "are anxious to remove the pith from the fallen sago-palm before it is spoiled; and Fritz fancies we could make of the trunk two pipes or channels to conduct the water from the Jackal Bay to Tent House. This, by enabling us to water our plants in the dry weather, would be a great advantage to us." The suggestion pleased me greatly and we made ready to carry it out; but the work required patience as well as activity, and with all our efforts we could not get the task completed till after sunset. It was necessary, therefore, to remain for another night in our wooden cabin. On the following morning we rose early, and without loss of time made preparations for carrying our newly-acquired possessions to Falconhurst.

I was glad to find the wound in the nostrils of the buffalo nearly healed, for I hoped to harness him to our little carriage, in the place of the ass, with the cow. He

Falconhurst: In English, Falcon's Nest. The translator uses sometimes the German words, and sometimes the English.

submitted without resistance, and when I went before, and led him by the string through his nose, I was thankful to see that the poor animal was already brought into subjection, so as to perform his task willingly. We passed the places where we had left the sack of wax-berries and the calabash-cups containing the gum from the india-rubber-tree: these had to be stowed away in the cart, and I sent Fritz and Jack on before with one of the dogs. They went quickly forward, and entered a grove of guava-trees at a little distance in advance of us.

A most terrible noise suddenly reached our ears, causing great alarm. I made ready my weapons, and flew to the assistance of my children, but, on arriving at the spot, saw Jack lying at full-length on the ground between the shrubs. On seeing me he exclaimed, "O papa, how absurd! It is our old sow again: she must do it on purpose to make fools of us. We wondered what the dog was barking at, and now look here!" Half inclined to be angry and half amused, I heard the familiar grunting, and stepped among the bushes. There, sure enough, lay our sow, looking very happy, with six or seven little pigs seemingly a few days old. We left with her some potatoes, acorns, and biscuit, and, continuing our homeward journey without further interruption, reached Falconhurst in safety.

Our first care was to arrange for the newly arrived guests. We were still obliged to tie up the young buffalo and the little jackal, and even the stately eagle was condemned to the same hard fate. Fritz gave him a place on a fig-tree root not far from the parrot, who was still tied by the leg; but, rather thoughtlessly, he had given the eagle a long string, which enabled him to move to a great distance, and then unfortunately uncovered his eyes. In

a moment, the bird became so wild and furious that our domestic animals fled from his presence; and the poor parrot, who could not escape, was devoured before we could prevent it.

Fritz would have killed the bird at once, had not Ernest begged for his life. "Give me your eagle," he exclaimed: "I will bring him up to be as tractable and tame as a little dog." Fritz would not give up his eagle; but he promised to make Ernest a present of Master Nip, the monkey, if he would tell him how to tame the eagle.

"I accept the offer," replied Ernest; "but I am not quite sure that it will succeed with an eagle as it does with parrots in America. Light a pipe, and blow some of the tobacco-smoke up his nose till he is giddy and intoxicated: his wild and savage nature will be calmed from that moment."

Fritz laughed incredulously; but Ernest persuaded him that at least it was worth a trial, and a pipe and tobacco were brought from the officer's chest. Fritz placed himself in front of the bird, and smoked such puffs under his nostrils, that he became completely stupefied, and stood immovable on his perch; and from that day his fierceness vanished. Fritz gave the monkey to his brother, with increased respect for the boy who knew so well how to put in practice what he had read.

The next morning I rose early, with the intention of carrying out the project so long decided upon, namely, the planting of bamboo-canes as a support to the young trees on the road from Falcon's Nest to Tent House. Our work began, almost as soon as we left Falcon's Nest, at the entrance to the road to Tent House, with the walnut, chestnut, and cherry-trees. These had been planted in rows, and were already much bent and curved by the wind.

I, being the strongest, dug holes in the ground with the handspike; and in them the boys placed a bamboo-cane by each tree, and tied it as a prop to the delicate stem. The conversation naturally turned upon the best manner of raising trees; and the boys overwhelmed me with questions, to which I could not always give correct answers.

"Are the trees that you have planted here wild, or tame, papa?" asked Fritz.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Jack. "Just as if people could tame trees as they can buffalo-calves and bustards!"

"You are very clever, Master Jack," replied Fritz; "but all wild creatures should be tamed; and mocking-birds require a ring through the nose, like the buffalo!"

"Now that is too bad!" said Ernest.

"Be it known to you, most learned people," I exclaimed, "that Fritz asked me a correct question, but he did not use the right terms: he should have said 'wild and *cultivated* plants,' not 'wild and *tame*.' Few living creatures exist that cannot be tamed in some way; and amongst human beings, even those we call wild or savage are clever by nature, and possess minds which can be improved by instruction, as plants are by cultivation and grafting."

"What is grafting, papa?" asked Fritz.

"Grafting," I replied, "is inserting a little twig of a superior sort on the stem of a tree that grows wild. It takes place in those knots or boles, which lie between the bark and the wood. They are often called 'eyes,' and can be seen plainly in timber. In all cases of grafting this knot is used, and the new twig attached to it. They then grow together, and better fruit is produced."

"That is very wonderful," remarked Ernest. "But where do people get the branches of good trees to graft upon the wild ones?"

"What we call in our home 'superior' trees grow wild in some climates," I replied, "because the earth and the air are adapted to them. Many of the most valuable fruit-trees of Northern Europe grow without cultivation in the south of Europe and Asia, and others in more distant parts of the world. Crab-apples, for instance, grew wild in England in the time of the Romans, and in that country no other fruit was then known but common nuts, crab-apples, and blackberries. By grafting from foreign trees on the crab-apple, and also on the common nut and blackberry, most of the beautiful apples, filberts, strawberries, and raspberries have been produced. It is the same in our country."

"Can you tell us, papa," asked Ernest, "where all the different fruit-trees came from?"

"I think I can give you the names of a few trees. Walnuts came originally from Persia, and hazel-nuts from Pontus in Asia."

"But cherries, papa," interrupted Jack. "I hope they may be natives of Europe, and perhaps of our own country."

"No, my boy," I replied. "Those you have seen have been brought from other lands. They are named cherries, after Cerasus, a state of Pontus in Asia, from which place they were first imported."

We made great progress while thus conversing, and reached the end of our fruit-tree avenue very quickly. After crossing the bridge over the Jackal River, we entered the plantation of our southern fruit-trees, which I also wished to strengthen by placing bamboo-canes as a support.

Here had been planted lemons, pomegranates, pistachio-nuts, mulberries, pines, and other tempting fruit-trees, the sight of which made us long for the time when they would bear fruit.

"But, papa," exclaimed Jack, "what about apples? They seem to be natives of Germany and Switzerland."

"They came originally from foreign lands, and apple-trees are found even in the cold climates of Northern Europe and Asia. No fruit is more likely to be improved by cultivation than the apple; and where they obtain proper soil, pure air, and sunlight, they are brought to great perfection."

At noon we returned to Falcon's Nest as hungry as wolves, just as the mother had prepared for us a most excellent dinner, consisting chiefly of the cabbage-palm. We dined with good appetites, and, while resting, I took the opportunity of speaking on a subject which, for considerable time, had occupied my mind and the mother's.

We had often found it difficult to mount to our sleeping-chamber by the rope-ladder. An accident might easily happen, for the boys often mounted recklessly; and for ourselves, a single false step might cause a fall. It seemed to me that a wooden staircase might be contrived in the interior of the large trunk of our tree.

"Did you not tell me, wife," I said, "that in the trunk of this tree you had discovered a hole, through which bees were passing?"

"Yes," she replied; "and it is evidently hollow beyond the point at which I have seen the bees enter. If hollow to the foot of the tree, it will help you greatly to carry out your project."

This idea of a staircase so excited the boys that they danced about the tree, and climbed like squirrels as high as they could reach, to discover by the sound how far down the cavity extended, by knocking against the trunk with axe and hammer. But this daring performance cost them dearly. The noise so disturbed the bees, that a swarm of

them rushed out, and furiously attacked the children with their stings. They rested in their hair, on their clothes, and even pursued them as they fled in terror and pain. Jack, who with his usual daring had been the first to reach the hole, was terribly stung, and his swollen and inflamed face was a piteous sight. Their mother laid cool, moist earth on the wounds; but nearly an hour passed before the pain was sufficiently appeased to enable them to join me in a more careful examination of the tree. They were so full of resentment against the heroic bees, that they were quite prepared to assist in an attack upon them, and I knew that something must be done quickly to prevent my young people from disturbing me with their groans and complaints.

While the still restless and angry bees were buzzing around the tree, I prepared certain materials with which I hoped to calm without destroying them. I collected tobacco, clay, a pipe, a knife, a hammer, and all else that I thought necessary. My first care, however, was to make for the bees a new hive, and, after finding a large calabash-gourd, I flattened the lower half, that my beautiful little bee-castle, when finished, might stand firmly on a piece of board nailed to a branch of the tree. I then cut a small, arched opening in front, for a doorway, and, having made a straw roof to place over it as a protection against sunshine and rain, my beehive was complete. This work occupied more time than I had anticipated: I was therefore obliged to put off the assault on the bees till the next morning.

The impatience of the young people roused us all at an early hour, and I began my undertaking by stopping up the hole in the tree, through which the bees passed in and out, with moist clay, only leaving room for me to

introduce my piece of hollow cane, which was to serve as a tobacco-pipe. I then covered my head with a piece of linen, and began smoking.

After a while, when all was still, Fritz climbed to my side with chisel and axe, and we cut away a portion of the tree, about three feet square, excepting at one corner, by which I allowed it to adhere, while I again smoked both inside and outside the tree till the bees were stupefied. The piece of the tree which had been cut away was then removed, and when the light entered, I discovered that the trunk was hollow from the ground to the floor of our sleeping-chamber. It was clear that we could build a winding-staircase with ease.

We were filled with delight at the beautiful work of the bees, and could scarcely find basins and bowls for so large a supply of honey and wax. I removed the bees to their new hive, and without losing time set to work on our staircase.

With the help of my boys, I cleared away all the decayed wood that remained in the hollow trunk of the tree, and carefully cleaned the sides of the interior as far up as we could reach. In the centre was placed upright, and firmly fixed in the ground, a strong beam, about a foot in thickness and ten or twelve feet high, around which I fixed my staircase in the form of a spiral line.

The entrance of the tree, which I had enlarged, formed a window, and gave us sufficient light for our work. To this we added a second, as the steps rose higher, and a third, to enable us to reach our sleeping-room in the tree-castle without the trouble of climbing our rope ladder. A second tree-stem was now introduced, and fastened outside the steps, for us to hold by as we ascended. My winding-stairs were then complete, and, if not exactly in accord

ance with the rules of architecture, were yet solid and convenient. We thought them superb.

While our staircase was building, Floss presented us with six little pups, two of which, a male and female, we kept. Jack had had great difficulty in feeding his young jackal, and, strange to say, this good-natured mother allowed us to replace her lost ones with this little stranger, giving her milk to it as kindly as to her own.

At about this time, also, our goat had two little kids, and the sheep five or six lambs. We saw our flocks increase with pleasure; but fearing that these useful animals might, like the ass, be tempted to leave our protection, we tied to the necks of the goat and old sheep some little bells brought from the wreck, which, if they wandered, would help to put us on their track.

Next to the staircase, the most important work I had in hand at this time had been the training of the young buffalo as a beast of burden, to supply the place of the ass. The wound in his nose was quite healed, and, by placing a small stick through the orifice, after the manner of the Hottentots, I could lead and guide him as easily as horses are led by a bit in the mouth. He had readily submitted to be harnessed with the cow in drawing a load, but I wished also to teach him to carry burdens on his back.

I began by making for him a broad girth of the skin of the dead buffalo; then, from time to time, bound various heavy articles upon it; and when, at last, the basket usually borne by the ass was put upon his back, he performed his task willingly.

Fritz, meanwhile, had not neglected the training of his eagle. He taught him to bring down birds and other small prey, holding him in leash, like a falcon, and always

rewarding him with some of the game. But, while the eagle had learned to obey him, Fritz was afraid to give him his freedom, and he could not yet be trusted near the poultry-yard.

Ernest, seized also with the fever of education, endeavored to regulate the capricious movements of the little monkey, but for a time with little success. Helped by Jack, he constructed a small cane basket to fasten upon Nip's back with a strap about his shoulders. The restless animal objected greatly at first; but partly by force, and partly by rewards of nuts or other tempting morsels, he was conquered, and would carry a load that was, for him, really heavy.

Jack, in turn, became anxious to train his jackal, to which he had given the name of Hunter. The little animal had grown very much since the old dog Floss took so kindly to him, and would play with the puppies in the most amusing manner.

Jack had given him the name of Hunter, hoping to make a pointer of him, and teach him to discover the game without killing it; and, though for the first six months the animal made little progress, Jack did not despair of success.

While my boys were thus occupied, I had been also busily employed. Among other wants candle-making was very urgent, as our present store, which had lasted a long time, was nearly exhausted.

Jack had proposed that we should use the hollow of a bamboo-cane as a mould; but it appeared to me that, in drawing the candle out of the mould, I should injure it. I therefore divided the cane first, and placed the wax inside the two halves, which, being tightly bound together, held it till it became firm.

Another difficulty arose, for our prudent housewife

objected to the use of our handkerchiefs and cotton neckties for wicks. I attempted to supply the place with thin strips of touch-wood, and also, at my wife's suggestion, with the threads of the karata-leaves; but after repeated experiments the decision was in favor of the old cotton-wicks, much as we might wish to dispense with them.

After our candle-making experiments, I tried my skill in the manufacture of boots and shoes from the sap of the caoutchouc-tree.

Filling a pair of my stockings with sand, I covered them with a thin coating of clay, and dried them in the sun. Then, with a brush made of goat's hair, I laid on three coats of the melted caoutchouc to obtain a proper thickness, and hung the shoes in the sun to dry and harden.

When, after an hour or two, the caoutchouc had solidified, I threw out the sand, and removed, first the stocking, and then the clay, leaving a pair of boots so useful and shapely, that my boys begged me to make each of them a pair of the same sort.

One thing I was anxious to do at once, for the children often grew tired of drawing water from the river for our domestic use.

By lengthening the sago-palm trunks, which had been made channels to conduct water from the bay to Tent House, I found that it could be brought to Falcon's Nest, the shell of the turtle serving for a basin, as we had long ago proposed.

It was needful, however, to support the shell-fountain; and stones cemented with clay were used, to raise it to a proper height and hold it in its place. In front I arranged a calabash-bowl to receive the overflow.

Thus day succeeded day: we had no time to be idle nor to lament our separation from our old home and the

society of mankind. Each of our discoveries or inventions was hailed with delight by the boys; and my wife and I gave thanks to God for so visibly blessing our efforts to make life pleasant in this strange land.

CHAPTER XIX.

GRIZZLE'S NEW FRIEND.

WE were busily engaged one morning in completing a hand-rail to our staircase, when a strange and unusual sound like the roar of a wild beast was heard at a distance; yet I could form no opinion as to the animal from which the sounds proceeded.

Mounting to our castle in the tree, we stood in anxious expectation, with loaded guns and our dogs close at hand. Suddenly Fritz, casting aside his gun, rushed forward, and, bursting into a loud laugh, exclaimed, "It is the donkey, papa! Poor old Grizzle!"

"He could hardly have made so much noise alone," I said, and, following Fritz, I came first upon the truant ass, and then, at a little distance, upon an animal evidently of the same race, but of a far more graceful form, and almost as elegant in its movements as a horse. I recognized it as the Onager, or wild ass, and at once cast about for some means of making it my prisoner.

Warning the children not to make the least noise, I crept cautiously to the place where the animals had stopped to graze. I then tied a slip-knot to one end of a piece of cord, and fastened the other end to one of the roots of the tree, placing a small stick in the knot to keep it

open, so that when thrown it would close round the animal's neck, and hold him.

In addition to this, I made a sort of cleft-stick, the ends of which I tied together crosswise, so as to form in the smaller part a pair of pincers, and attached strings to the upper ends, by which I could draw it together or loosen it, as I pleased.

The unconscious animals had, in the mean time, wandered by degrees nearer to the place where we stood; with a caution to Fritz, I gave him the loop-end of the rope, and we advanced as far as the length of the string would allow.

The creature sprang back at our sudden appearance. — Ours were probably the first human faces he had ever met — but, as Fritz did not move, he began to graze again; and the boy, holding a handful of oats, gradually approached our friend Grizzle.

Without a moment's hesitation, the ass came eagerly forward, and the stranger, unable to control his curiosity, followed to share the tempting morsel.

Then, with great dexterity, Fritz threw the noose so that the knot closed about the animal's neck as he started back with a bound, and in a moment he fell to the ground as if suffocated.

I rushed quickly to loosen the string, threw over his head the halter belonging to old Grizzle, and placed on each side of his nose the lower ends of the cleft-stick, with which I could, by pulling the strings at the upper ends, compress the nostrils, and make him submit to my will, as farriers curb a restive horse.

After removing the noose, and tying two long pieces of rope to the strings which compressed the pincers on the left and right of the nostrils, I fastened the end of each to

the nearest tree-roots, and left him to recover himself, and show by his behavior whether any thing more was necessary to overcome and tame him.

In the mean time, the rest of the family had hastily descended from the tree, and stood, with wonder and delight, admiring the beautiful stranger. He was of a slighter build than the ass, and far superior in appearance, yet the creature evidently partook of the nature both of the horse and the ass.

He suddenly sprang to his feet with the evident determination to escape; but the pain caused by the pressure on his nostrils when he moved damped his ardor, and he at last became so quiet, that I ventured to lead him to the sheltered tree-roots which for the present served us for stables. Here I tied him by a long string attached to the halter, which gave him room to move about, and yet be near us and in safety.

That the truant ass might not wander from us so easily in future, I also placed him in the stable, tied by a halter near the wild ass, making old Grizzle a prisoner for a few days, as well as the onager, that they might be society for each other. I wished to accustom him also to the fodder eaten by our domestic animals.

We found it no easy task to train our onager. Privations and blows were resorted to with little effect, and I was finally driven to adopt a plan which seemed both cruel and repulsive, but which traders in the wilds of North America practise when they capture wild horses, namely, to bite the ears.

At the time this story was written, sixty years ago, and when farriers used this cruel instrument, few people had learned that not only horses, but other animals, can be managed more easily by kind and gentle treatment than by severity.

This accomplished my purpose, and in a few weeks our captive could be ridden with tolerable safety. I managed to contrive a kind of nose-band with reins, by which a rider could guide his steed as he pleased.

A triple hatching in the poultry-yard put in our possession forty little chickens, which ran about in all directions.

This reminded me again of the necessity of contriving a more convenient place of shelter for our animals and feathered-folk, before the rainy season, which I knew could not be far distant.

I decided upon a more suitable covering over the arched roots of our tree, the space underneath being a sleeping and roosting-place. To do this we interlaced bamboo-canes over the arches of the roots, filled the crevices with moss and clay, and covered all with a mixture of tar and lime-water, thus making a flat solid roof on which we could safely walk, and around it placed a low railing.

We had set out one evening to gather a store of potatoes, and on our return I proposed to my wife that she should go on with little Frank while the boys and myself continued our way to the oak-grove for some acorns. Ernest had with him his little monkey, and Fritz proudly sat on the quite tamed onager.

On reaching the spot, we fastened the steed, which the boys had named Lightfoot, and were hastily gathering the acorns, when the ape, with a sudden spring, dashed into a thicket, and the frightened scream of a bird, with the rush and flapping of wings, showed that some dweller in the bushes had been disturbed by Master Nip.

Ernest, the first to reach the spot, exclaimed joyfully, "Papa, here is a nest full of eggs! The ape is struggling with the bird; but I can hold him while Fritz takes her prisoner."

They returned in a few moments, Fritz bringing in his arms a fine Canadian heath-fowl similar to the one he had shot, and Ernest with his girdle stuck full of leaves, sharp-pointed like a dagger, and belonging, I thought, to a plant called the "sword-lily."

Holding out his hat, Ernest exclaimed, "Look, papa! these are the eggs of the Canadian fowl. How pleased mamma will be!"

"But these leaves, Ernest — what are they for?"

"Oh, I put them here to carry home to Frank, to play at soldiers with. They are just like swords."

We finished our work, placed our sacks on the onager's back, and turned our steps homeward, to Falcon's Nest, — Ernest with the precious eggs in his hat, Fritz between the sacks on the onager, while I had patiently undertaken to carry the heath-fowl.

The mother managed so cleverly as to induce the fowl to sit again upon her eggs, and in a few days exhibited to us fifteen little, Canadian chicks.

A day or two later, as Frank was playing with the leaves of the sword-plant, Fritz said, "Let me make you a whip of the leaves before they decay; it will help you to keep the sheep and goats in order; but you must split the leaves for me before I can braid them!"

Struck by the flexibility of the fibres, I examined them more closely, and, though it was a mere conjecture, told my wife that I thought they might belong to the *Phormium tenax* — the New Zealand flax.

"Oh," she said, "what a discovery! It is the best you have ever made. Get me a leaf! I can make stockings, shirts and all sorts of wearing-apparel, if it prove to be flax."

I moderated her zeal a little by reminding her, that,

even if it were flax, the leaves were not yet made into linen, nor had we enough for that purpose.

At this Fritz and Jack silently disappeared, and I presently saw them riding away, one on the wild ass, and the other on the buffalo. But they soon returned, bearing before them on their steeds immense bundles of the flax-plant, which they placed before their mother.

"You have done well," I said, "in bringing your mother so much work. We must all help her to prepare the flax, and first it must be steeped."

"Steeped, papa? That will take a fire."

"No," I replied: "flax-steeping is performed by air, sun, and water or at least moisture. The plants must stay in water until they decay, so that the fibres separate. The soft ones are thus removed; and the tough, flexible ones, which do not so soon decay, can be made fit for spinning."

"In a climate like this, would not Flamingo Marsh be a good place for steeping the flax?" asked my wife.

We all approved of her proposal, and on the following morning the ass was harnessed to the little wagon, and the bundles of flax laid upon it, while Frank and Master Nip rode between, on the seat. On arriving, the bundles were laid in the water, with heavy stones to keep them from coming to the surface.

After a fortnight we spread the flax in the sun to dry, and a single day accomplished this so thoroughly, that we were able to take it in the cart to Falcon's Nest the same evening.

Warned by frequent showers, and a sky covered with clouds, of the approach of the rainy season, our next care was to gather a store of potatoes and manihot or cassava-roots; nor were cocoanuts and acorns despised. We

missed more than any thing the wheaten flour which had made our bread in the father-land; and all the seeds of grain that remained in the mother's bag had been sowed, in the hope that the rainy season would cause them to germinate, and produce an abundant crop by spring.

Before our arrangements were completed, the first storm came upon us in torrents. It was impossible for us to remain in our sleeping-apartment, and we took refuge in the hollow trunk, with whatever provisions we had at hand. Our homely dwelling was so crowded that we could scarcely move, and the smell from the stables, the lowing and clucking of the animals, and the suffocating smoke when we attempted to light a fire, made our situation almost unbearable.

These difficulties were overcome by degrees. The animals were moved farther away, and by piling up articles on the winding staircase, we made room enough to work during the day and lie down at night. Cooking was dispensed with as far as possible, both to spare us the tormenting smoke, and to save our dried wood in case of colder weather.

On the evening of the first day, Fritz and I, in spite of the rain, had to search for the animals, and bring them to shelter under the arched roots, as well as to obtain for them the necessary food. Before I slept, I determined to discover some other means of passing the winter, if the weather would enable me to venture out; but no change took place for nearly a week, and during that time we could only subsist on the acorns, cocoanuts, cold meat, and potatoes that we had brought to our retreat.

We had hay enough for the animals at present, and a stock of grain for the poultry; and I decided that, when we were unable to supply them with sufficient food, they must be turned adrift to forage for themselves.

A slight change in the weather gladdened my heart, for it enabled me to make some little improvements in our habitation, and with the help of Fritz to bring a store of provisions from Tent House. The animals being in the spaces under the arched roots, we had the hollow trunk of our tree to ourselves, and, by the time the rainy season really set in, we were becoming reconciled to our position.

Fortunately the winter was not cold as well as wet, yet my wife considered it necessary to contrive some outer covering to protect Fritz and myself from the rain, when we made excursions on account of the animals or to obtain stores from Tent House.

She found in one of the sailor's lockers two canvas shirts, to which she sewed hoods to cover our heads, and over which we spread layers of caoutchouc, which rendered them completely waterproof.

While using our hollow tree as a refuge from the weather, we were still actively employed. Fritz and Jack taught little Francis to read; my wife occupied herself with her needle; while I began a journal of the events which had occurred since the shipwreck, and the story of our lives in this foreign land. This, however, was regarded as a pastime, and my frequent recourse to the memory of the others, with the questions and discussions that arose from it, gave us all great enjoyment. My work, during these dark wintry days, consisted in making coarse and fine carding-combs for the work the mother had in prospect, when the weather should make it possible to dry the flax and prepare it for her first experiments in spinning.

CHAPTER XX.

SPRING DAYS AND THE SALT CAVERN.

IT is impossible to describe our joy, when, after so many long weeks of confinement and privation, we again gazed on the clear sky and the bright sunshine. The sorrows of the winter were forgotten. We felt ourselves inspired with new hope, and the work which lay before us in the summer-hours seemed, in our gladness, but child's play.

The land we had cultivated was flourishing. Our tree-plantation was in excellent condition. The seeds were springing up, and the trees were putting forth their young leaves of delicate green. The ground was covered with flowers of every hue whose sweet fragrance filled the air; while birds of the most brilliant plumage made the woods resound with song.

We began our work at the castle in the tree, for the rain had greatly damaged the sail-cloth roof, and dried leaves had drifted into our sleeping-apartment. The stalls of the animals under the arched roots were also damaged, as well as the staircase in the trunk. While Fritz and I were repairing these, Ernest and Jack turned the animals out to graze upon the soft green grass. My wife reminded me of the flax, which required beating, combing, and carding, before it could be spun or woven.

"You will probably find Tent House no less injured by the rain than this," she added; "and while you and the

older boys are absent, I can stay here with little Frank, and spin the flax, for you are sadly in need of clothes."

"But what will you do for a spinning-wheel and a spindle?" I asked.

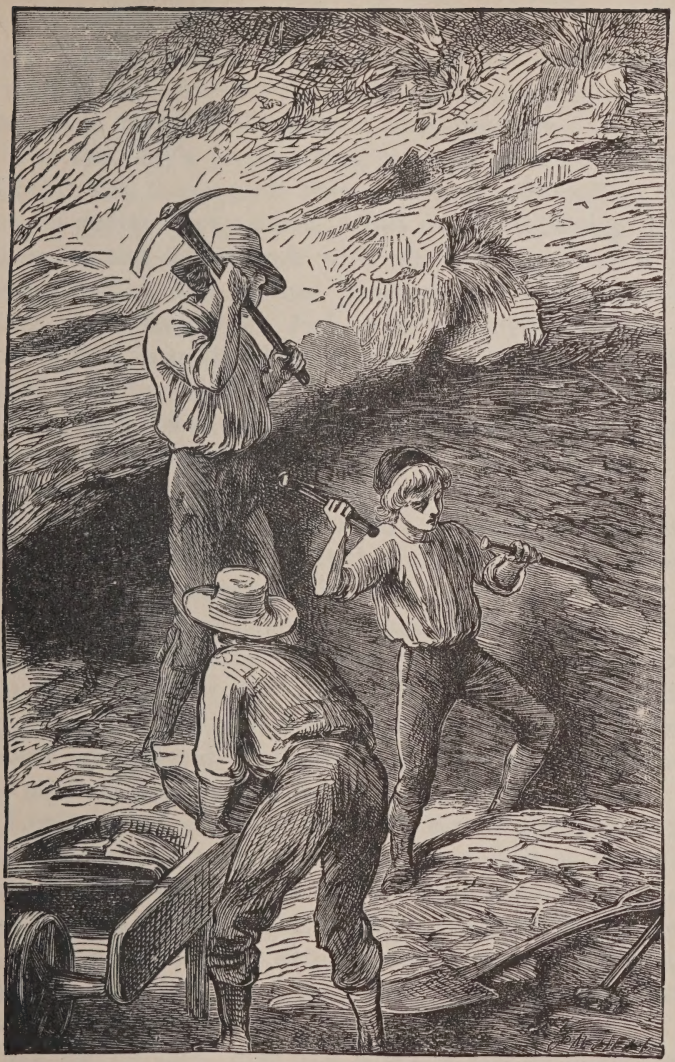
"Oh!" she replied, "I expect you to make them. After building rooms and staircases, ladders and carts, you will find little difficulty, I am sure."

By dint of study and perseverance, I did contrive to turn to account one of the lightest of the wheels I had brought from the wreck, and straps from the skin of the dead buffalo. The boys prepared the steeped-flax, and we left, as she said, all that would be required for a new supply of clothing.

The damage done at Falcon's Nest could not be compared to the destruction at Tent House. Storm and rain had overthrown the tent, torn the sail-cloth covering, and so completely soaked the stores of provision, that the most of them would have proved useless, had we not quickly placed them in the sun to dry. Fortunately, the well-built pinnace had sustained no injury, although the tub-boat was entirely broken up, and two of the three powder-casks were so thoroughly soaked as to be useless.

This latter circumstance led me to consider how I might contrive winter-quarters where such disasters could not occur; and my mind turned to the bold project of Fritz, — to hew out a cave in the rocks. This, with the tools and strength at our disposal, seemed impossible, except as the work of several summers; but I determined to hew out a cellar for our powder-flasks; and, while the mother was still occupied with her spinning, I set out one morning with Fritz and Jack to make a beginning of the work.

Making choice of a spot where the face of the rock appeared smooth and steep, and from the top of which



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could be seen a most extended view of Deliverance Bay, I marked with charcoal the outline of an opening, and we took upon ourselves the office of stone-breakers.

The first day's progress was so slight, that I despaired of being able to complete even a common cellar before the time of another rainy season. But on the following day, when we had set to work with renewed vigor, the rock became softer, and we had penetrated to a distance of about seven feet, when Jack, who was trying to bore a hole with a large hand-spike, cried out, "I am through, papa! I am through!"

"Through what, my boy? You are certainly not through the mountain."

"Yes, I am! Hurrah, hurrah!"

"He is right, papa," said Fritz; "indeed, he is right. The iron spike has gone right through into an open space, for I can turn it round as I like."

Seizing the hand-spike, I worked it about with such force, that an opening was soon made large enough for one of the boys to slip through; but, as I approached it, a puff of foul air rushed out, and for a moment I was almost overpowered. "Come away!" I cried, "to breathe the air from that opening would be certain death."

I explained to my boys that under certain circumstances carbonic acid gas accumulated in caves such as this appeared to be, rendering the air unfit for respiration; and sent them to collect some hay, which I lighted and threw in. It was immediately extinguished, even after I several times repeated the experiment; and I saw that we must resort to other measures.

We had brought from the wreck a box of fireworks intended for signals, and, some of these being brought, I threw them into the cave and scattered a train of gun-

powder about them. Retiring to a little distance from their lighted fuses, we watched the result. A great explosion followed, and a torrent of the gas rushing out was replaced by pure air. We sent in a few more rockets, which flew around like fiery dragons and ended in a shower of stars. This concluded our fireworks, and I made a trial of the lighted-grass, which showed that all danger was over.

I sent our active little Jack to Falcon's Nest, to tell his mother of our joyful discovery and bring her and his brothers back with him, and, also, some of our wax candles that we might explore together this wonderful vault.

In about an hour they arrived in our state-carriage, or, more properly speaking, potato-cart; and we entered the grotto, each bearing a lighted wax-candle. Fritz provided himself with a tinder-box, in case the candles should go out, and I led the way, feeling the ground with my feet.

In spite of their curiosity, the boys and their mother followed rather fearfully; and our dogs, who were also of the party, showed by their timid, uneasy manner, that they did not altogether approve of the position.

We had not advanced very far, before the appearance of the grotto startled us with its wonderful beauty. The lights that we carried were reflected on the walls in golden light; the columns, which rose from the floor to the vaulted roof, sparkled and glittered in all the colors of the rainbow; and crystals hung from the roof in fantastic forms. The floor was covered with soft firm sand that showed no trace of dampness.

I recalled descriptions I had read of salt-mines in Poland, and, breaking off a bit of the crystal, I found that we were in a cavern of crystallized rock-salt, not the least of whose advantages would be, that both ourselves and our cattle would now be provided with a never-failing supply.

Our admiration of the cavern, as we penetrated further, knew no bounds. Plan after plan was proposed for making it useful, and our inventive powers were newly excited by this fresh opportunity for their exercise.

It was decided that Falcon's Nest should continue to be our summer residence and sleeping-quarters, but that the entire day was to be spent at Tent House, while we prepared a winter-home at our rock-castle.

Openings were first hewn out of the rock for admitting light and air, and the door and windows we had brought from the wreck were transferred from Falcon's Nest. The immense space was then divided into separate apartments. At the right of the entrance were to be our dwelling and sleeping-rooms, and at the left, the kitchen, workshop, and stables. The smaller division, which was so deep in the cave that no windows could be made in it, I determined to use as cellars, storehouses, and magazines. I hoped by degrees to supply the necessary doors, as well as other additions needful for a comfortable dwelling-house.

Our residence at Tent House revealed several advantages which we had not foreseen. Turtles came ashore to deposit their eggs in the sand, and from their flesh we had many a sumptuous meal. When more than one appeared at a time, we used to cut off their retreat to the sea, and, turning them on their backs, fasten them to a stake driven close to the water's edge by a cord passed through a hole in the shell. We thus had a fresh turtle always within reach, for they throve well, and were in as good condition after several weeks, as others freshly caught. Lobsters, crabs, and mussels also abounded on the shore. And this was not all: a fresh surprise awaited us.

As we approached Tent House one morning, we were attracted by a most curious phenomenon. The waters

out at sea were agitated by some unseen movement, and as they heaved and boiled, struck by the beams of the morning sun, seemed illuminated by flashes of fire. Over the water where this disturbance was taking place, hovered hundreds of birds, screaming loudly, or darting downward, and plunging beneath the water.

Suddenly this extraordinary mass advanced to the bay, and we found the phenomenon to be caused by a shoal of herrings many leagues in extent, and several feet deep.

Reminding my boys that when Providence sends plenty, we ought to put forth our hands to take of the supply, I sent for the necessary utensils and organized my fishery.

Fritz and Jack stood in the water, and, taking up the fish by pailfuls, threw them on the sand. My wife and Ernest dressed and rubbed them with salt, and I arranged them in small barrels, a layer of herrings and one of salt alternating. This occupied us several days, at the end of which time a dozen or more barrels of excellent salted-provision were secured against the winter's need. The refuse, which we threw into the sea, attracted a number of sea-dogs; and we killed several for the skin and for the oil, which we knew would be useful to burn in the ship-lanterns at night, during the winter.

The bladder of the dog-fish served for another purpose. I found an empty sailor's chest, in the sides of which I bored holes, and, putting into it heavy stones, sank it in the stream, where it formed a pot for crabs and lobsters, drawn by the attractive bait of the dog-fish's bladder. This contrivance obtained for us a constant supply, the chest being secured by a chain. I also formed an enclosure for herrings by means of which I quickly peopled our fish-pond.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE WINTER HOUSE IN THE GROTTO.

LEST a change in the weather should come before we expected it, we resumed the work of fitting up our rock-castle. I found, on closer inspection, that the crystallized salt of the cavern had for its base a species of gypsum.

Breaking off several pieces, and carrying them to the fireplace at Tent House, I heated them red-hot and then reduced them to powder, which, when mixed with water, made a beautiful white plaster.

My first attempt at plastering was the covering of the sides of two of the herring-barrels, to exclude the air from the cracks. The other casks I left as they were, for I intended to preserve their contents by smoking.

To do this, the boys and I built a small hut of reeds and branches, and strung our herrings on lines across, under the roof, then lighted a fire of moss and brushwood, which threw out a dense smoke, and, in a few days, perfectly cured the fish.

About a month after the appearance of the herring, we were favored by a visit from other shoals of fish. Jack espied them first, and called to us that a lot of young whales were off the coast. We ran down, and discovered the bay swarming with great sturgeon, salmon, and trout, all making for the mouth of Jackal River, to deposit their spawn upon the stones.

Jack ran for his bow, and arrows armed with fish-hooks, a skein of packthread, and two bladders of the dog-fish. I watched with surprise as he fastened the bladders to one end of his arrow, and to the other a long string, the end of which he fixed to a stone on the shore, then shot his arrow into the body of a large salmon.

"Well done!" cried his brothers, as the fish struggled to escape, held to the shore by the string, and floated by the bladders, till we drew him on shore, and put him out of his misery.

This success roused us all. Fritz went for his harpoon; I made my appearance, like Neptune with his trident (mine being a hay-fork); and Ernest provided himself with large hooks and a line.

Our greatest difficulty was the landing of our booty. Fritz struck a sturgeon at least eight feet long, which resisted our united efforts till the buffalo was brought and harnessed to the line. Nor was it a light matter to preserve our fish. Some we dried and salted; some my wife boiled in oil, as they preserve the tunny; and the spawn of the sturgeon, a huge mass, weighing not less than thirty pounds, I laid aside to prepare as *caviare*, a favorite dish in Holland and Russia.

The sounds and air bladders I cut in strips, and dried in the sun for isinglass. This is all that is required to prepare this very useful glue. It becomes hard, and when wanted for use is dissolved over a slow fire. Ours proved to be so clear and white, that I determined to use it for window-panes, in place of glass.

In this beautiful climate, little or no attention was necessary for the kitchen-garden: the seeds sprang up and

Neptune: The God of the ocean. He is commonly represented with the trident, a three-pronged spear, and riding in a car drawn by dolphins.

flourished with apparently not the slightest regard for time or for the season of the year. Peas, beans, wheat, barley, rye, and Indian corn seemed to be constantly ripening; while cucumbers, melons, and all sorts of other vegetables grew luxuriantly. The moisture caused by the heavy rains had no doubt produced this result, helped by the stream of water constantly flowing through our palm-tree pipes from the Jackal River.

At a little distance from the garden was a sugar-cane-plantation in flourishing condition; and the anana-roots which we had transplanted promised to yield us an ample store of this incomparable fruit. I was encouraged to hope that the experiments at Falcon's Nest had proved equally successful; and we started one morning to visit the spot. On our way, we passed the large field in which the mother had sown the European grain, after the potatoes had been taken from the ground.

In one part was barley, in another wheat; and farther on we saw rye, peas, millet, and field-beans in such profusion that I owned to the magic of the mother's bag.

"The harvest of the maize-field has begun already, has it not?" I asked, as half a dozen Canadian fowl and an immense flock of smaller birds rose in the air, alarmed by our approach, while to complete the number of unbidden reapers, two kangaroos with tremendous leaps escaped in safety from our dogs.

Fritz released his eagle, which he always carried perched on his game-bag, uncovered his eyes, and threw him aloft after one of the fugitives; then, springing quickly on the back of the onager, he followed his pupil with the swiftness of an arrow.

The Canadian fowl shrank in terror from his enemy, and at last sank to the earth, where the eagle pounced

upon him, and would in a moment have made an end of his life, had not Fritz been close at hand to save him.

The jackal, who had become a capital pointer, brought to his young master half a dozen fat quails, which in the hands of the mother made us an excellent repast, when supplemented by a drink of her own invention, made of the green maize crushed in water, and sweetened with the juice of the sugar-cane.

The remainder of the day was spent in securing seed-grain for another year's sowing, and in making preparation for a little excursion which had been proposed for the following day.

It was a project of my wife to establish self-sustaining colonies of our animals at some distance from Falcon's Nest, where they would be secure and would find sustenance. Twelve young fowls, four pigs, and two pairs each of sheep and goats, were accordingly spared from our stock for this purpose, and placed in the cart for the ass and buffalo to draw, with provisions, tools, and other utensils.

Fritz rode before on Lightfoot to reconnoitre, as we took our way to a part of our domain which had not yet been explored. We had the usual difficulty, at first, in getting through the high grass, and had frequent recourse to our hatchets, till we reached the opposite end of the wood, where we saw before us an open plain on which grew numbers of small bushes. They seemed to be covered with snow-flakes, if that had been possible, and I was not surprised when little Frank cried out, "O mamma, look! it has been snowing." Fritz put his steed to the gallop, and presently returned, bringing me a branch loaded with beautiful white down, which, to my joy, I found to be cotton.

It was a discovery of inestimable value to us, and, gathering all that could be contained in three capacious bags, we continued our journey, which, after crossing the cotton-field, took us to the summit of a pretty, wooded hill. The view was glorious! Luxuriant grass at our feet stretched down a hillside dotted here and there with shady trees, among which a bright, fresh brook rippled over a rocky bed, while below lay the rich green forest, with the sea beyond.

What better situation could we hope to find for our new stock-farm? Pasture, water, shade, and shelter, — all were here. We pitched our tent, built a fireplace, and, leaving the mother to prepare our repast, began the erection of our shed.

The trees I had chosen stood in the form of a parallelogram, or long-sided square. The longest side, facing the sea, consisted of three trees, — one at each corner, and one near the middle. In the trunks of these, at about ten feet from the ground, I cut notches, as also in three at the back, which grew nearly opposite. The notches in the back were but eight feet high; and beams placed across from front to back formed a sloping roof.

Having fastened the beams with nails, I made a rude roof of bark, cut in squares and fastened with the thorny spikes of the acacia, which we found growing here. Our nails were too precious for lavish use.

With wild vines and flexible reeds, I wove together four outer-walls to the height of about five feet, and in the open space above made trellis-work to give entrance to air and light. Separating walls divided the apartment into two unequal parts; one of which contained the stalls for the cattle, and a place shut off with palings for the fowls; and the other, sleeping-apartments for ourselves, when we should need to pay the place a visit.

The trees which had served for our rude building were new species to my boys, and I took occasion to explain their value.

"From the fir," I said, "we get turpentine and tar: so we may look forward to preparing pitch for our yacht with

ACACIA-TREE.

tar and oil, and cart-grease with tar and fat. You will not, perhaps, so well appreciate this terebinth-tree. It yields a transparent gum, which when burned gives forth a most delicious perfume, and, when dissolved in spirits of wine, forms a beautiful varnish."

The instinct of our goats detected various kinds of bark, among which was that of the cinnamon, not, perhaps, equal to that of Ceylon, but fragrant and agreeable.

Of the nature and origin of these substances, and the uses to which they could be applied, I had to furnish lengthy explanations; for I wished to foster the interest my young people always manifested to extend the circle of their knowledge.

To accustom the sheep, goats, and fowls to their new home, we took care to fill the feeding-troughs daily, not only with their usual food, but also with salt and other favorite provender both morning and evening.

I had calculated that this undertaking would be finished in three or four days; but at the end of a week, as we were not ready to leave our new establishment, I sent Fritz and Jack to Falcon's Nest to obtain a fresh supply of provision for ourselves, and to give to the animals and fowls we had left food for ten or twelve days.

The messengers took with them the ass to draw the cart in which to pack our provisions, and the onager and buffalo for riding-horses. They started in good spirits, and with a light touch of the whip induced old Grizzle to accompany them at a brisk trot.

During their absence, Ernest and myself made a short excursion in the neighborhood to learn more of the country adjacent to our farm. Crossing a brook, we reached a large marsh covered with the rice-plant, growing wild in great luxuriance; and a little farther on, Master Nip made a sudden dart into a thicket, where I found him regaling himself with strawberries that were not only quite ripe, but of an aromatic flavor resembling that of the anana, or pine-apple.

Having refreshed ourselves with them, we filled the

monkey's basket, covering it with a thick layer of leaves, lest it should please Master Nip to overturn and dispose of his burden. I also pulled some of the rice, that we might ascertain whether it would serve us as food.

Continuing our walk, we came presently to a tiny lake which we had already admired from a distance. A number of black swans were gliding in stately tranquillity upon it, their graceful forms mirrored in the dark blue waters. The sight was so charming, that I could not allow my hunting propensity to disturb its serenity. But Floss had no such scruples. She observed a strange movement in the water, sprang in, and quickly re-appeared, dragging with her a curious little animal of a soft brown color, the fur of the under part of the body being of lighter shade. Its feet were furnished with large claws, and were also completely webbed; the head was small, with deeply set eyes and ears, and terminated in a broad, flat bill, like that of a duck.

We laughed at its droll appearance, and, for want of a better, gave it the name of the Beast with a Bill. I have since learned that it was the duck-billed platypus. Ernest willingly undertook to carry it, that it might be kept and stuffed as a curiosity.

After this we returned to the farm, thinking, rightly, that our messengers might soon arrive; and, sure enough, in about a quarter of an hour Fritz and Jack made their appearance, and gave an account of their mission.

I was pleased to see that they had not only carried out all my directions and commissions, but had also brought with them other articles which they judged would be useful in completing my plans.

We provided amply for the animals, and on the next morning left the farm, which we had named Wood Grange, for a new excursion.

After walking a short distance, we reached a wood, and were received by an enormous number of apes, who kept up a series of the most unearthly cries, and pelted us with a perfect hail-storm of pine-cones. It was only by firing our guns, loaded with small shot, that we could disperse our assailants.

Fritz picked up one of the cones, and I recognized it as that of the stone-pine. "Gather some," I said, "by all means. You will find that the kernel has a pleasant taste, like that of the almond, and, by pressing, we can obtain from them an excellent oil."

When this had been done, we left the wood of apes and fir-trees, and soon drew near to Cape Disappointment. The view from the summit of the little hill was so beautiful that I decided to make another establishment here. The work was far easier to us now, in consequence of our experience at Wood Grange, and in six days we had a pretty little cottage, on what, at Ernest's suggestion, we called "Prospect Hill."

Much as we had done, the end for which our expedition had been planned was yet unfulfilled. I had not met with a tree which suited me for making a boat.

We returned to the wood for a closer inspection of the trees, and I fixed upon a sort of oak, the bark of which was closer than that of the European oak, and more resembled that of the cork-tree. The trunk was at least five feet in diameter, and I fancied that its coating, if I could obtain it whole, would perfectly answer my purpose. I marked a circle at the foot, and with a small saw cut the bark entirely through. Fritz attached the rope ladder, which we had brought with us, to the tree, and sawed a similar circle eighteen feet above mine. We then cut out perpendicularly a slip of the whole length, and, after removing it, had

room to insert the necessary tools for loosening the whole bark.

It was a difficult matter to sustain it as we did so, and then to let it down gently to the grass; but we succeeded, and I began my boat while the material was fresh and flexible.

From each end of the roll of bark I cut a wedge-shaped piece about five feet long, and closed the edges with pegs and strong glue; so that they formed a point at each extremity, like a savage's canoe. Having, by so doing, widened it too much in the middle, we put strong ropes around, and drew it into the form we desired. This was all that I could do without other tools, and I despatched Fritz and Jack for the sledge (which ran now upon wheels from a gun-carriage), that the canoe might be transported to the vicinity of Tent House. During their absence, the boat was drying in proper shape, and I found some naturally curved-wood just suited for ribs to support and strengthen the sides.

When the lads returned with the sledge, it was time to rest for the night; but with early dawn we were again busily at work.

PLAT PU·

CHAPTER XXII.

FRANK AND THE CALF.

WE placed our canoe on the sledge, and loaded it with all that it would hold. At the bamboo-swamp I cut a fine mast, and, passing on, we came to a small opening or defile, in the ridge of rocks, where a little torrent rushed from its source down into the larger stream below. Here we made a halt to erect an earth-wall across the gorge, which being thickly planted with prickly-pear, Indian-fig, and every thorny shrub that we could find, promised to make, in time, an effectual barrier against the intrusion of wild beasts; the cliffs being, to the best of our belief, in every other part inaccessible. For our own convenience, we retained a winding-path, concealed and defended with branches and thorns. Opposite the little cascade we built a cabin of bark, and, naming it the Hermitage, resumed our way after a two-days' halt.

Though we reached Tent House some time before sunset, we were too tired to proceed with our boat that night. It was with renewed energy, however, that we set at work next morning, and the boat was soon ready to launch.

It was lined with wood and furnished with a keel. Brass rings were found, among our possessions, for the oars and stays for the mast. Instead of ballast, I laid at the bottom a layer of stones covered with clay and, over this, a flooring of boards. The benches for the rowers

were placed across; and in the middle rose the bamboo mast with its triangular-sail.

For greater security, I had a couple of air-tight bags made from the skins of the dog-fish, well tarred and pitched. These I inflated, and made fast on each side of the boat just above the level of the water. These floats would prevent either the sinking or capsizing of our little craft, however much she might be loaded.

I may as well relate in this place what I omitted at the time of its occurrence. During the rainy season our cow presented us with a bull-calf, and, that there might be no difficulty in managing him, I pierced his nostril at a very early age, and placed in it a stick, to be exchanged for a ring when he should be old enough. The question now arose how and by whom he should be trained.

"Let us teach him," said Fritz, "to fight with wild animals, and defend us, like the fighting-bulls of the Hottentots."

"I cannot understand," said the mother, "why there should be fighting-oxen in any country."

"The natives of South Africa," I said, "dwell in a country infested with wild beasts. To protect their flocks and herds, they place one of their trained oxen in charge of the rest, and wonderfully do they perform their office.

"At the slightest appearance of danger the courageous animals lead all the rest to a spot of pasture, and group them in a circle; the young calves and weaker cattle being enclosed in the centre. The fighting-oxen then place themselves outside, and with raised heads and projected horns face the enemy. Their loud bellowing is enough, at times, to alarm their foes; but they will often nobly sacrifice their lives for the protection of the flock.

"In olden time, it is said, warlike tribes would place

these champions as a vanguard of their armies, and not seldom was victory gained by their heroism."

The boys were delighted with this account; but they all agreed that our little bull need not be trained to such exceptional service. Yet he required teaching, and who should do it? Ernest had enough to do with his monkey; Jack had his buffalo and young jackal; Fritz was satisfied with his onager and eagle; so there only remained little Frank with nothing to teach.

"Well, little man," I said, "will you undertake the teaching of the calf?"

"Oh, yes, papa! I'm not a bit afraid," he replied.

I advised him to use kind measures as best likely to succeed with all animals. "But, Frank," I said, "what name will you give him?"

"Oh, I will call him Grumbler, for he can't bellow yet, and only makes a noise like grumbling."

On hearing this, the boys began to discuss the question of names for their own pets. Jack proposed to call his buffalo Storm. "It would be so grand," he said, "to hear them say, 'Here comes Jack riding upon the Storm.'"

This joke produced laughter; but there could be no objection, and the name was fixed upon. To the two puppies we gave names in accord with their color, — Brown and Fawn.

For two months we worked steadily at our salt-cave in order to complete the necessary arrangement of partition-walls, so as to put the rooms and stalls for the animals in comfortable order for the next long rainy season, during which time, when other work would be at a stand-still, we could carry on many minor details for the improvement of the abode. We levelled the floors first with clay; then spread gravel mixed with melted gypsum over that, pro-

ducing a surface, which did very well for most of the apartments; but I was ambitious to have one or two carpets, and set about making a kind of felt in the following way: —

Spreading a large piece of sail-cloth, I saturated it thoroughly with a strong liquid made of glue and isinglass, and laid upon it wool and hair from the sheep and goats, which had been previously cleaned and prepared. We then rolled and beat the felt until it adhered to the cloth, and, when dry, our covering for the floor was by no means to be despised.

Happening to awake unusually early one morning just after these labors at the salt-cave were completed, my thoughts turned to the length of time we had now passed on this coast, and, to my surprise, I discovered that the very next day would be the anniversary of our escape from the wreck. My heart swelled with gratitude to the gracious God, who had then granted us deliverance, and who had ever since loaded us with benefits; and I resolved to set the morrow apart as a day of thanksgiving, in joyful celebration of the occasion.

"My dear ones," I said that evening at supper, "prepare yourselves for a great festival: to-morrow will be a day never to be forgotten. It is the anniversary of our arrival on the island."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed my wife. "Have you not made a mistake in your reckoning? the time appears so short."

"No, dear," I replied: "we were wrecked on the 31st of January. I discovered this by the almanac of last year, which I found on board. I have marked off in every week since, the Sundays as they arrived, till the end of

December. Thirty-one days have gone by since that date, and to-morrow, therefore, will be the 1st of February, the anniversary of the day in which we so mercifully reached this island. My bookseller has not sent me an almanac for this year," I added with a laugh: "so I was obliged to keep a regular daily account."

"Ah, papa!" exclaimed Ernest, "did you have a long pole, and make a notch in it for every day, and longer ones for weeks and months, like Robinson Crusoe?"

"No, my boy," I replied, laughing; "but I think his was a very good plan."

After we had retired to rest, I heard the boys talking over the festival for which they had been told to prepare, and some little secret seemed to be the subject of conversation. Now and then they spoke in whispers. At break of day on the following morning, we were startled by the report of a cannon, and rushed from our sleeping-room in the tree, filled with the greatest astonishment, scarcely believing we had heard aright.

But I noticed that Fritz and Jack were absent, and I heard Jack exclaiming, as they ascended our staircase, "Did we not rouse them from sleep quickly with our thunder?"

Perceiving at a glance that we had been seriously alarmed, Fritz hastened to apologize.

"Forgive us, papa! we thought that such a day of rejoicing as the anniversary of our deliverance from shipwreck, should be welcomed with a salute of cannon."

We understood the feelings which had influenced the boys, and accepted the intended honor to the day for which we had such reason to be thankful.

We sat and rested for a long time after breakfast, talking over our plans for the day, one of which was to visit

our salt-cavern, and there make a beginning, by recording in my day-book the date of our happy deliverance.

I then read a chapter in the Bible, and we sang a few hymns, and afterwards knelt, to offer up our heartfelt thanks to God for his mercies in the past year, and implore his aid and protection for the future. I was anxious to impress upon my children that we owed our present comforts, and even our lives, to the blessing of God on our endeavors.

The mother informed us that she intended to honor the day by giving us a holiday-dinner of the most precious of our stores; and, when we had enjoyed it with thankful hearts, I said, "Now, children, we will spend the remainder of the day in joyful amusement. You must display your gymnastics, and, like the combatants of ancient times, struggle for the highest honors. Your mother and I will be the spectators, and will recompense the winners with the prizes of victory. This shall be the order of procedure: first, firing with gun and pistol. And here is a mark for you," I said, producing a board roughly shaped like a kangaroo, and of about its size. This target was much admired; but Jack was not satisfied till he had added ears, and a long leather strap for a tail. Each of the three competitors was to fire twice. Fritz hit the kangaroo's head each time; Ernest hit the body once; and Jack, by a lucky chance, shot the ears away from the head, which feat raised a shout of laughter.

A second trial with pistols ensued, in which Fritz again came off victor.

Then, desiring the competitors to load with small shot, I threw a little board as high as I could into the air, each, in turn, aiming at and endeavoring to hit it before it touched the ground.

In this I found, to my surprise, that Ernest succeeded quite as well as his more impetuous brother Fritz. As for Jack, his flying-board escaped wholly uninjured.

After this followed archery, which I liked to encourage, foreseeing that a time might come when ammunition would fail; and I saw with pleasure that my elder sons were really skilful, while even little Frank acquitted himself well.

A pause ensued, and then I started a running-match.

Fritz, Ernest, and Jack were to run to Falcon's Nest by the most direct path. The first to reach the tree was to bring me, in proof of his success, a penknife I had accidentally left on the table in my sleeping-room.

At a given signal, away went the racers in fine style. Fritz and Jack, putting forth all their powers, took the lead at once, running in advance of Ernest, who started at a good steady pace, which I predicted he would be better able to maintain than would his brothers so furious a rate.

Long before we expected to see them back, a tremendous noise of galloping caused us to look with surprise toward the bridge; and Jack made his appearance thundering along on his buffalo, with the onager and the donkey tearing after him riderless, and the whole party in the wildest spirits.

"Halloo!" cried I, "what sort of foot-race do you call this, Master Jack?"

He shouted merrily as he dashed up to us, then, flinging himself off, saluted us in a playful way, saying, "I very soon saw that I hadn't a chance: so, renouncing all idea of the prize, I caught Storm, and made him gallop home with me." While Jack was talking, Fritz advanced, and fifty paces behind came Ernest, holding the penknife in triumph.

"How is it you have the knife, Ernest," I said, "when Fritz has arrived in advance of you?"

"I reached Falcon's Nest just two minutes before he did, papa," replied the boy; "but I believe he would have been the winner if he had not started off so rapidly. How long have we been?"

"Fifty minutes," I replied, "and it generally takes me an hour and a quarter to go to Falcon's Nest from here and back, by the shortest way: so I consider that you and Fritz have done well, and you are the winner by two minutes."

"Any thing more to win, papa?" asked Jack.

"Yes; when you have all rested there must be a climbing-match," I replied. "The pads are here in readiness for you." A few minutes' rest sufficed, and then I was astonished to notice the agility of Jack. He climbed the tree like a squirrel, and completely eclipsed his two brothers.

But, in riding, Fritz carried off the palm, although Jack was not far behind him. He rode and galloped on the onager without saddle or stirrups; he even jumped off while his steed was in motion, and mounted again by clinging to the animal's mane, as the circus-riders do; and Jack almost equalled him in cleverness.

I had thought that the riding was over, when our little Frank appeared from the stable in the cave, leading young Grumbler, with a neat saddle of kangaroo-hide, and a bridle passed through his nose-ring.

Saluting us with a pretty air of confidence, the child exclaimed, "Attention! You see before you Milo of Cretona, the great bull-tamer. Will you allow me to show you some of my performances?"

Frank then put his bull-calf through all his paces. He

made him walk, trot, and gallop past us in turn, and obey his voice and movements in a manner that quite astonished us. We all gave him the praise he deserved; his brothers cheering him most lustily.

"I couldn't have managed Grumbler so well, if mamma had not helped me," he said.

The athletic performances ended with swimming and diving, in which Fritz proved himself master of the art; Ernest being afraid to go beyond his depth, and Jack so violent in his exertions at first as to be soon exhausted.

We returned to Falcon's Nest along the seashore, and my wife, who preceded us, had spread a table with the prizes which she, as Queen of the Lists, was to present to the victors.

Great was the pleasure which these gifts occasioned. Fritz, as the best shot, received a double-barrelled gun, and, for swimming, a splendid hunting-knife, on which he had often cast longing eyes.

To Ernest, for winning in the running-match, was awarded a beautiful gold watch similar to one which belonged to Fritz. Other smaller articles were also distributed to them, after Jack had received, for climbing, a pair of steel spurs and an English riding-whip; to little Frank, for his cleverness in training Grumbler, his mother gave a pair of spurs and a whip made of the skin of the rhinoceros.

Then, to the mother's surprise and the delight of the boys, I stepped forward, and presented her with an English work-box, of the existence of which she had not known, containing a number of most useful articles, — cotton, thread, a needlebook, scissors, thimble, a fruit-knife, and many other things.

She was truly pleased with my gift, and the boys, in

their happiness, begged me to allow them to close this festive day with another cannon salute. Much as I wished to save the powder, I could not refuse the request, and the boys welcomed as proudly the roar of the little cannon as if it had been a forty-pounder.

We at last joined the dear mother at the supper-table, and, after our evening prayer of thanksgiving and praise, gladly ascended to our castle in the tree, and sought the repose we so greatly needed. And so ended the festival of our first anniversary on this unknown land.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MISCHIEVOUS MONKEY.

SHORTLY after our festival, I remembered that at about this time in the preceding year a flock of ortolans and wild pigeons had paid us a visit. It seemed advisable to obtain some of them for winter use, and, as I wished to economize our powder as much as possible, I thought I would try the plan of the dwellers in the Pelew Islands, who, as I remembered to have read, snare them with a kind of bird-lime made by mixing oil with the gum of the caoutchouc-tree.

Fritz and Jack started joyfully on an expedition to the caoutchouc-grove, taking with them all the calabash-vessels they could carry. This reminded my wife that we ought also to add to our supply of these useful articles.

"But the calabash-wood is at such a distance!" I said. "I hardly see how to spare the time."

"Oh," she replied, "I had almost forgotten the young

shoots I planted near the potato-fields last year. We will take a walk there now, if you like. They may have come to perfection."

Calling Ernest and Frank to be our companions, we visited the spot, and found the gourds in a most flourishing condition. Though in different stages of progress, a majority of the fruit was decayed, and its shells were as hard as iron. We chose such as were most suitable, and after returning home, cut them into vases, bottles, cups, and spoons.

Before we had finished our work, the young riders returned at full gallop on Storm and Lightfoot. They had a large supply of the india-rubber-gum, but in addition brought us news of fresh discoveries.

Jack displayed a small animal which he had shot, and which looked to me like a badger; and Fritz produced a crane as the result of his sport, and also two roots, one of which Ernest said was anise, and another called by the boys the monkey-plant.

"Why have you given it that name?" I asked.

"Because, papa," said Fritz, "in an open spot not far from Wood Grange we came upon a troop of monkeys, who were digging roots in a most comical manner, and with ridiculous grimaces. Holding the roots with their teeth, they threw themselves heels over head to pull them up. Our dogs quickly dispersed the monkeys, and I tasted one of the roots. What do you think it is, papa?"

"I do not know the root," I replied; "but I can trace in it some resemblance to a plant which the Chinese consider not only wholesome and strengthening, but medicinal. It is even supposed to prolong life; and the Emperor of China claims all lands on which it grows, guarding them by sentries. It is also found in Tartary, and, I believe, in some parts of America."

"But what is the name, papa?" asked Jack.

"Ginseng," I replied. "Before we eat it, however, we must try Master Nip and the fowls with a piece."

"We have wax berries, too," said Fritz, "and a resin which looks like turpentine. But, papa, our new farm is nearly destroyed by those dreadful monkeys. The animals and poultry are scattered in all directions, and the cotton and fodder are torn up and ruined."

"Are you sure it was the monkeys?"

"Who else could have done it, papa?" exclaimed Fritz. And while we stood looking at it, there was a noise of rushing wings, and a swarm of birds passed over our heads at a great height, flying in perfect order one behind another. As they approached the lake, they began to sink, and presently alighted on the field of rice.

We followed cautiously; but they had sentinels at every point to give warning of danger; and at a movement of mine the whole flock rose into the air. I unhooded the eagle, who flew above them, and quickly brought one down dead at my feet. "This is it, papa, — a crane."

That evening some of the ginseng-roots, which we had tested by means of the monkey and the fowls, were cleaned and cooked. We ate them with great relish.

I hastened to prepare the bird-lime; and our agile Jack placed sticks, over which it had been spread, on the branches of the trees. A few birds were quickly caught; but, although the sticks were again and again covered, the sack containing the birds remained very light, and I resolved to adopt the custom of an American colony in Virginia, and attack them when asleep.

While snaring the birds, Jack had brought me a beautiful pigeon, which he thought should not be killed, and

which Ernest recognized as a European pigeon from the ship. Before night we had two pairs of these in safe-keeping; but the number of wild birds was not even sufficient to fill one of our casks. I determined, therefore, to provide torchlights, and invade the great tribe of pigeons and ortolans in their night-quarters.

As I had expected, an immense swarm of birds were roosting on the trees. Suddenly roused by the glare of light, the terrified birds fluttered helplessly among the branches, and many fell before we began to use the sticks.

When we struck the branches, it was all that my wife and Frank could do to gather up the numbers of birds that lay on the ground. The sacks were soon full, and we turned homeward to store our booty and retire to rest.

The day following was spent in plucking, boiling, roasting, and stewing our birds; but on the next, a great expedition was arranged to prevent a repetition of the monkey-invasion at Wood Grange — I hoped to inflict such a punishment as to make them shun our neighborhood for the future.

We were to be absent several days and my wife provided us with a good store of provision, while Frank and herself remained at home.

I took with me an abundance of specially prepared bird-lime, — much stronger than that which we had used for the birds, — a number of short posts, plenty of string, and a supply of cocoanut-shells and gourds.

In due time we arrived at a convenient spot in the forest near Wood Grange, well concealed by bushes and underbrush. Here we made a halt, pitched a small tent, and tethered the animals. The dogs also were tied up, lest they should roam about, and betray our presence.

The cottage was quiet and deserted, and I lost no time

in preparing for the reception of visitors, hoping to be ready for them, and out of sight ourselves, before they arrived.

We drove the posts lightly into the ground to form a paling, and wound strings around them in all directions, to make a kind of labyrinth, through which it would be impossible to pass without touching either the stakes or the cords.

Every thing was then plentifully besmeared with bird-lime; and basins of the mixture were set in all directions, strewed with rice, maize, and other dainties for bait.

Soon after sunrise, the noise, which sounded in the distance, awoke us, and announced that our enemies were approaching. Seizing our arms, we divided ourselves into two parties, and, leading our dogs, hid in a spot from which we could observe, unseen, this most ridiculous spectacle.

The monkeys began by climbing to the branches of the trees near the farm-house, where they sprang about, yelling and chattering enough to utterly bewilder a man's brain. Then suddenly the whole swarm broke from the branches, and hopped pell-mell after one another to the farm-stead.

They broke through the strings, pulled up the poles, rushed on the tempting bait, or climbed to the roof of the building.

By degrees the chattering of the rabble changed to cries of rage, or fear; for not one had escaped being caught by the bird-lime, either on head, breast, back, or paws.

It was a droll sight to see the poor creatures. Some tried to clean themselves; others were hopelessly entangled with snares which they trailed after them; and others still, being fastened to poles, fell with them to the ground. In their haste to obtain a cocoanut, two had grasped it at

the same moment, and were immediately stuck together; and another, in his eagerness to drink the palm-wine in a calabash-shell, had tipped it up so greedily, that it remained on his forehead and whiskers, like a mask.

Though I was sorry for them, I could not help laughing; and, when their panic had really reached its height, I set the dogs upon them, as nothing remained for us but to put them with the least suffering out of their misery.

In a few minutes there lay before us a veritable battle-field, and we had to dig a pit to bury the poor apes. The boys were saddened by our work, and hoped they should never again witness such a sight. "It was the half-human look with which they seemed to ask us to help them that made it so dreadful," said Fritz. "Let us do something to divert ourselves, that we may forget it."

It was no light task to restore order in our dismantled cottage, seek our scattered flocks, and settle them peacefully again in their yards and sheds. One day while thus engaged, I heard two or three times the sound of something falling under the nearest palm-tree. On going to discover the cause, I found three beautiful birds which had been caught by the lime. In their struggles to escape, they had fallen to the ground, but were still living.

They belonged to the pigeon tribe, and were evidently from the Molucca Islands, in which country they are called "carrier-pigeons," or "Molucca doves." This addition to our poultry-yards gave me great pleasure, and I resolved to begin, as soon as possible, to build a new and handsome pigeon-house.

In a few days we returned to Falcon's Nest, leaving Wood Grange again settled and comfortable; and I at once arranged for a prolonged stay at Tent House, where several matters beside the proposed pigeon-house in the rock required attention.

My plan for the latter was to hollow out an ample space in the cliff, facing Jackal River, and close to our rocky home; fit it up with partitions, perches, and nesting-places; and then to attach to it a large wooden front, with entrance-holes, slides, or shutters, and a broad platform in front, where the birds could rest and walk about.

When, after a few weeks, we thought it fit for habitation, I said to Fritz one morning, "We shall have to practise now some sort of enchantment to attract a colony

MOLUCCA PIGEONS.

of pigeons to this new dwelling"; and, as he did not understand what I meant, I told him of a way which a pigeon-dealer in our village described to me, and which certainly did have some appearance of witchcraft.

"Pigeons," I said, "are very fond of the odor of the anise-plant, and, if we rub the edges of the pigeon-holes with oil from the anise-seed, the birds in passing in and out will carry some on their wings, and the aromatic odor from it will attract others to follow them to their home.

The men who practise it are often dishonest, for, by what they call their 'charm,' they attract the property of others; but we may collect a colony without any scruple."

"How are we to get the oil?" asked Fritz.

"Very easily," I replied. "Some of the seeds must be pressed in a mortar until the oil is extracted, and then the whole mass must be strained to separate the oil, which I will mix with lime and salt to make a paste."

Fritz assisted me in preparing the paste; and in a short time our project resulted in the introduction of the pigeons to their new abode.

The European birds were by this time quite friendly with the three beautiful strangers, and, when Jack scrambled up to look in upon them through a pane of glass I had fixed in front, he saw them contentedly picking up the grain.

Early on the third morning, I aroused Fritz, and had him ascend the rope-ladder to arrange a cord upon the sliding-door, so that it might be opened or closed from below, and also to pour fresh anise-seed oil all about the entrance. Then we returned, and woke the rest of the family, telling them, that, if they liked, they might see me let the pigeons fly.

All came out at once, and stood in the open air below the dovecote. I gave a sign to Jack to draw up the trap-door by the string; and presently the pigeons put out their heads timidly to examine the way to the outside world. Suddenly, with rushing wings, they rose in the air, and were quickly out of sight; but after a few turns in the air, as if to stretch their wings, the flock returned, apparently as ready to re-enter the new house as if it had been their home for years.

Our pleasure was, however, soon damped, for the three

foreign birds rose again in the air, and took their way toward Falcon's Nest, so that I at once gave them up as lost. The tame pigeons fluttered about us in a most friendly manner, picking peas as we threw them on the ground, and going back and forth between it and the house with the greatest readiness.

But nothing was seen of the fugitives until about the middle of the next day, when, the most of us being at work inside the cave, Jack sprang in shouting, "Here he is! He has come back!"

"Who, who?" we all asked, "and where?"

"The blue pigeon!" cried Jack. "Hurrah, hurrah!"

There, sure enough, stood the pretty fellow, but not alone. He was billing and cooing to a mate, a stranger of his own breed, apparently inviting her to enter his dwelling. She was persuaded to do so, and we saw with satisfaction that this pair, at least, were domiciled in their new home.

"We will leave the entrance open for the other two," I said; and, as I spoke, Fritz called out, "Here they come!" as another approached, bringing also his mate. The third and handsomest was the last to make his appearance; but late in the day, when Frank and his mother went out to prepare supper, the child returned, calling us to hasten to the dovecote. The third stranger had returned with a lovely bride; and, encouraged by the presence of the first arrivals, the pair soon made themselves at home.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JACK'S ADVENTURE. — THE STRANDED WHALE.

NEST-BUILDING soon began, and, among the materials gathered by the birds, I observed a long gray moss, or lichen, and thought it might be the same that hangs from the bark of old trees in the West Indies, where it grows in great tuft-like beards.

My wife had no sooner heard of it than she devised fifty plans for making it of use. Would we but collect enough, she would sort and clean it, and there should be no end of the bolsters, pillows, saddles, and cushions she would stuff with it.

For the discovery of nutmegs, we had also to thank the pigeons; and the seeds were carefully planted in our orchard.

For a considerable time no event of importance occurred. Our work went on with little incident until Jack broke the monotony by presenting himself one morning, after a few hours' absence, in a most deplorable condition, covered from head to foot with thick, green mud. A great bundle of Spanish canes was on his back, muddy and green like himself. He had lost a shoe, and altogether he presented so ludicrous a picture of misery, that we could have laughed, had he not seemed ready to cry.

"My dear boy, where have you been?" I asked.

"Gathering reeds," he replied, "behind the powder-magazine in the marsh. I wanted to make some cages and

baskets, and I saw such beauties on the edge of the marsh, that I couldn't help trying to get them. I jumped from one tuft of firm earth to another quite safely, till I got near the reeds, and then my foot slipped, and in I went, — first up to my ankles, and then to my knees, — and there I stuck, and began to scream with all my might; but no one came to help me, excepting my poor little jackal."

"Did he come to you?" asked Ernest.

"Yes, indeed!" replied the boy, "and set up such a barking and howling, that the sound echoed round the rocks awfully. But he couldn't help me, and no one heard our cries. At last, in my terror, I thought of the reeds. I could just reach them with my hunting-knife: so I cut down this bundle, and laid it on the edge of the marshy pool, to form a kind of bank, and, while I rested my body upon it, I was able to set my legs free; but I left one of my shoes behind."

"So I perceive," I replied. "But how did you manage to get away at last, Jack?"

"O papa!" he said, laughing, "I got astride the bundle of reeds, and caught hold of the jackal's tail. Of course he ran back to the dry ground quickly enough; but I held fast, and so he dragged me and the reeds to the bank in no time. But I never had such a fright in my life as when I felt myself sinking in the marsh. I thought it was all over with me."

"Thank God for saving you, my boy," I said, "and also for giving you the courage and presence of mind to act as you did."

I examined the reeds, and found that I could use them for making parts of a loom for my wife. By splitting two of the largest, I formed a frame for the warp; and the boys cut some of the more slender into small pieces for

teeth for the comb. Their curiosity was excited, especially as I had each part carefully hidden when finished. At last I told them not to be surprised if they found I had made a musical instrument, called a "tum-tum," such as the Hottentots use, which would play a tune when their mother beat time with her foot. They knew I was in fun; but, when at length the weaving-loom was finished and presented to their mother, they quickly understood the value of its movements.

At about this time the onager presented us with a beautiful little white foal, very much resembling herself, whose graceful movements as it grew older led me to name it Swift.

For several days after I had finished the loom, we employed ourselves in preparation for winter in the interior of our grotto. The distance from fresh water was a difficulty to obviate, and I determined to erect a fountain and connect it, by pipes of hollow bamboo-canes, with the sago-palm conduits at Tent House.

An open cask served for a basin, and a smaller one hanging near received the overflow. My wife assured me that it gave her quite as much pleasure as if it were a marble basin supported by sea-horses or dolphins.

We had come now to the time when any day might mark the beginning of the rainy season, and it became necessary to gather a good supply of potatoes, rice, guavas, sweet acorns, pine-cones, anise-roots, and as many of the ananas or pine-apples as were ripe enough to pluck. A quantity of seeds, both native and European, were also sown in the ground, as we cleared it.

To preserve the various articles in our rock store-house required a larger number of vessels than we possessed, and I broke up the raft, that we might make use of the casks for our store of roots and dried fruit.

Our pigeon-house could not accommodate more than the three pairs of foreign pigeons, the five European birds, and their broods. We were fortunate in having a good store of peas and grain for them, and I expected a large addition after the rainy season.

Winter was rapidly ushered in by heavy clouds, which spread over the horizon, and were followed by pelting showers. The wind rose, and blew violently from the sea, and the waves dashed in foam against the rocks, till at length frightful storms of thunder and lightning drove us to our shelter in the cave. It was near the beginning of June, and we had twelve weeks of bad weather before us.

I was glad that we had already installed several of the animals in our rock stables. The cow we brought for her milk, and the onager because the little foal still wanted its mother's care. Grizzle and Lightfoot we knew would be needful, in case of short periods of favorable weather, to take the boys to Falcon's Nest, where the rest of our animals and the poultry still remained.

The dogs, the jackal, the monkey, and the eagle were with us also, and seemed happy and very lively. The ape especially amused us by his tricks: indeed, the companionship of these animals tended to shorten our winter evenings very considerably.

Notwithstanding our previous work in the cave, we still found a great deal to be done to render it really comfortable. One great inconvenience arose from the darkness. The cave had only four openings for light, — the door, and three windows, — one for our sitting-room, another in the workshop, and one which lighted the three sleeping-chambers. With the entrance-door closed, the stables, and other parts of the cave at the back, were in total darkness.

To remedy this, I fixed a bamboo-cane firmly in the ground, near the centre of the cave, the upper end reaching the roof; and Jack climbed to the top with a pulley and stake, which he fastened to a cleft in the rock. A long string was passed through the pulley, and to it I fastened a lantern which we had brought from the wreck. Being filled with clear oil and having four wicks, it burned brightly, and, when I drew it up to the roof, the crystal walls sparkled in its light, and we could see to the deepest part of the cave.

Now that we could continue our work with ease, Ernest and Frank busied themselves in fitting shelves against the walls of our sitting-room to hold our books; the mother and Jack arranged the various articles used for cooking on a kind of dresser formed of planks; while Fritz assisted me in fitting up the workshop, and fixing his turning-lathe in its place in one corner.

There were also a little forge that had belonged to the ship, a pair of bellows, and an anvil, which we placed together in an opposite corner. The carpenter's bench stood in the centre; and the tools and other articles of all kinds were hung upon the walls.

Ernest and Frank had arranged our books in classes, and I was surprised to find what a number we had. Some of these we had brought with us from Europe, and others were fortunately saved from the wreck, — voyages and travels, natural histories, and many other learned and interesting books, besides a box of mathematical and astronomical instruments, maps and charts, and an excellent terrestrial globe.

I noticed also grammars and dictionaries of various languages, and among them those of the English tongue. Fritz and Ernest had learned English at school, and could

speak and write it a little during our stay in England, and I also had studied this language, which is the one in principal use among sea-faring men. With French we were all as well acquainted as with our own native Swiss.

We talked over this wonderful library during our evening meal, and the boys were glad of the opportunity of continuing the study of languages. The mother, who had become acquainted with a Dutch family at the Cape of Good Hope, could express herself well in that language. Jack seemed to consider the Italian and Spanish languages much more worth the trouble of learning. Spanish, he said, was such a grand-sounding language.

It was decided that we should all study German and French. English and Dutch were to be carried on by the mother and her two elder boys. Ernest wished to learn Latin, as the root of all languages, as well as to continue his favorite studies of natural history and medicine. For myself, I determined to search among the books for a Malay grammar, for it was not at all unlikely that we might have a visit from the natives of the East India islands.

There still remained several unopened chests; and when, at last, we found time to seek for them, many unexpected treasures presented themselves, — several looking-glasses, two console-tables with polished marble tops, a chest of drawers, two well-furnished writing-desks, a musical box, a chronometer, and a sea-watch, which I own I did not know how to use, and other fancy articles. In short, we found ourselves rich beyond what we had imagined possible; and the three months in which we were shut up in our winter-quarters passed so quickly that many things I had intended to make were not even begun.

Console-Table: A table whose slab or top is supported by brackets.

We were lodged like princes. My dear housefolk began to insist that our winter residence should have a grander name, and it was at last settled that it should be called Rock Castle.

Toward the end of August, the weather, although at times clear, became especially stormy; and the rolling waves, that broke so fiercely on the shore, became really frightful. Rain, thunder, and lightning continued for hours, and lashed the ocean into fury. We were thankful for the shelter of our rocky dwelling.

By degrees the wind and storm subsided, the rain ceased, the sun appeared, and we ventured out into the free air.

As we walked towards the chain of rocks near Jackal Bay, the far-sighted Fritz discovered something large and round that appeared to be lying on the little island near Flamingo Marsh. He took it at first for a sloop capsized in the storm.

Even after examining with my telescope, I could not decide what it could possibly be. Having been so long shut up in the house, we were ready to embark on board our boat and sail to the spot; but the bark-boat, or piroque, was so filled with water, that it was too late, after we had bailed it out and re-arranged the tackle and rigging, to make our proposed excursion.

We were ready soon after breakfast the next morning, and, as we approached, our conjectures were very amusing. My own impression proved to be correct, — a large whale lay stranded on the island, evidently thrown there by the violence of the waves. I went around the island to find a safe landing-place, entering at last a little creek, from which we went on shore on a sandy beach.

I was pleased to find that this little island, which I

could cross in ten or fifteen minutes, was in some parts very fertile, and that by care its fertility might be greatly increased.

Two ways presented themselves for reaching the stranded whale,—one over the rocks; the other longer, but on level ground. I chose the former, and climbed to a high point, from which I could command the view of the whole island, while the boys took the level road.

The landscape was deficient in trees, thus forming a great contrast to Falcon's Nest and the opposite coast near Tent House, as well as to the shore near Rock Castle, all of which I could easily distinguish from the height on which I stood.

Joyful shouts made me presently turn to the point at which lay the whale; but the boys were at the foot of the rocks near the shore, and calling, —

"Papa, papa, do come and look! We have found such a quantity of shell-fish, and some pieces of rock that look like coral."

I went down to join them, and found, as they had said, both shell-fish and coral, which had been brought there by the stormy waves.

"What is coral, papa?" asked Jack.

"It is in some wonderful manner produced by a small creature called a 'polyp.' Many thousands of these live together like ants. They pile the coral to form their curious dwellings, until they form rocks of large size; and, when they reach the surface of the sea, rain and the atmosphere fertilize them, thus making coral reefs or islands."

"What an immense creature!" said Fritz as we approached the whale. "I wish it could be useful; but I am afraid there is not much for us to gain out of such a great carcass."

"You forget," said Ernest, "that the blubber and the whalebone are useful, and the skin also."

"I think the inspection will content us for the present, and after dinner we will return to see if the stranded whale cannot be made as useful as other of our discoveries."

The boys found it a heavy task to row through the tossing waves, and I had to exert all my strength in steering and baling out the water with which the dashing waves were constantly filling the boat.

"If we could only find some large clock-work wheels," I said, "we might perhaps learn to make our boat proceed without so much trouble."

"There are two large iron wheels in Rock Castle, papa, and two spits which mamma uses for roasting: could we not fix them upon the boat?"

"Possibly," I replied; "but, until they are so fixed, we must use the oars. But thank you, dear Fritz, for the hint."

We talked about the coral-insect during dinner, for the mother and little Frank were delighted with the specimens we brought home; and both expressed a wish to accompany us in the afternoon, if the sea became calm.

"I should like to see the great creature," said my wife; "and will you not tow the empty herring-casks behind the boat? You will be sure to find them useful."

The weather promising to be favorable, the boys proceeded to load the casks with tools and fire-arms, and foot-straps to aid them in mounting the great fish.

Although the sea was calmer, our progress with the boat was as difficult as in the morning. Rowing against the tide, with all our efforts we could not land near the whale, and, leaving our boat and casks in a place of safety, we proceeded on foot.

The enormous mass startled my wife and Frank, and no wonder, for I judged that the whale could not be less than sixty feet long, and in thickness near the head nearly thirty. The weight must have exceeded two hundred tons.

What seemed most remarkable, was the fact that the head should be a third of the whole body, and yet the eyes no larger than those of an ox. The interior of the jaw was lined with long, dark, flexible bones, — the whalebone of commerce, — some of which in the roof of the mouth, were at least twelve feet long. The tongue alone would have weighed a thousand pounds. The deep abyss of the throat also created surprise among the boys; and Fritz expressed his wonder that such an enormous monster should have so small a gullet, for it appeared scarcely large enough to admit my arm.

"The whale cannot certainly swallow any thing but small fish," said he.

"No," I replied. "It feeds on small fish, and even on worms and insects: its special food is a small sea-animal, like a lobster, found in immense numbers in the icy seas of the North and South polar regions. They are swallowed in immense numbers in the water that he drinks. This water he sometimes discharges through his nostrils with a force that resembles a water-spout, especially when he is attacked by whale-fishers. But we must now begin our work with this leviathan, or evening will come upon us before we are aware."

Fritz and Jack instantly put on their foot-straps, and, mounting on the back of the whale, ran over the monster from the head to the tail. I desired Fritz to cut off the upper lip with his hatchet, while I separated the lower from the jaw with my chopper. This exposed the whalebone, and gave me an opportunity to remove nearly a hundred strips from the head.

All at once the air was filled with carrion-birds of all descriptions, and the number seemed to increase every minute. They whirled about us in a circle, and alighted on the prey so greedily and so boldly, as to snatch away from before our very eyes pieces of flesh that we had cut off. We were obliged to strike right and left with our tools to destroy or banish the invaders.

I separated a part of the entrails, and cut a piece from the tongue, which I had read was considered a delicacy.

By this time, evening was approaching, and, after loading our boat and the casks with a heavy freight, we rowed vigorously out to sea, anxious to reach home as soon as possible.

We started again in the early morning, leaving Frank and his mother at home; for I knew the work of removing the parts containing blubber or train-oil would be unpleasant.

Having dressed ourselves in jackets, vests, and coarse shirts, which my wife had searched for in one of the sea-chests, we began our work in earnest by throwing the refuse to a distance to attract the birds away from us, and retaining only the parts most suitable for producing train-oil, and also long pieces of the skin. Before sunset, I was satisfied with what we had obtained, and we returned to the boat to refresh ourselves with a bath, and then return home.

While on our way, Jack said, "Papa, why were you so anxious to bring away all these disagreeable parts of the whale? Of what use are they?"

"Of great use," I replied, "especially in countries where no trees grow to provide wood for casks, and no hemp to make ropes, as is the case among Greenlanders, Esquimaux, and Samoyeds. The entrails of the whale form a substi-

tute for one of these purposes, and the sinews for the other. The finer parts of the latter they use as thread for sewing their clothes and boots; while the former is as valuable to them as to us, for it produces lamp or train-oil. The sinews are also useful in many countries to make strings for musical instruments, little air-balloons, and" —

"What, papa!" they all exclaimed, "air-balloons! You cannot mean those which carry people through the air!"

"No, my children," I replied, "only those which are to ascend in a room. Large air-balloons are made of silk, and varnished with caoutchouc to render them air-tight, and then covered with a net of silken string, to which is attached the car or basket in which the aeronaut is seated. The upper part of the balloon is then filled with gas, and, as gas is lighter than air, the balloon rises and floats."

On arriving at Rock Castle, our freight was concealed behind the rocks until it could be cleansed and dried on the morrow. After refreshing ourselves with another sea-bath, and changing our clothes, we presented ourselves at the table, where a plentiful supper awaited us.

CHAPTER XXV.

ROWING BY MACHINERY. — THE TURTLE.

WE began our task on the next morning by raising a stand or rough scaffolding for the tubs of blubber, so that when heavily pressed, the oil might overflow into vessels underneath.

The blubber was afterward boiled in a caldron over a

fire, at some distance from our abode; and we succeeded, by skimming and straining, in producing a large supply of really excellent train-oil.

The day's work was far from agreeable. The dreadful smell oppressed us all, and especially my poor wife, who, though she endured it with accustomed good temper, recommended that the new island should be the headquarters for another colony, where, as she said, animals would be safe from apes and other plunderers, and where we could arrange to boil blubber, strain oil, and do other things of the kind.

This proposal met with hearty approval from the boys, who were always charmed with a new plan. They were eager to act upon it at once, but I reminded them that we must wait for suitable weather; and that the boat must be cleansed from its last cargo, and the attempt made to carry out the idea of assisting its progress by wheels which should be turned by wind or water, or perhaps both.

I chose the strongest of the spits, and passed it through the two sides of the boat, below the hanging seats, resting it upon a square piece of iron in the centre, to which it was fastened. The ends projected beyond the boat on each side; and upon these ends I placed the wheels, to turn as on an axis. In each end of the spit I managed to drill a hole for the linchpin, to keep the wheels in place.

In front of these I arranged two smaller wheels, formed of whalebone, to turn in the wind, like a windmill; and the action of these, as they touched the larger wheels, caused them to move, and propelled the boat forward.

When all this was finished, I proposed a short trial-trip to the boys, and our success was delightful to us all. There was wind enough to turn the windmill-wheels

pleasantly, and we glided along with surprising rapidity. I promised that, on the day following, we would all embark for a longer voyage.

The evening was spent in preparing dresses, arms, and food; and we were ready, betimes, next morning. The sea was smooth, and my rowing-machine performed its task easily, as I directed our course to the opposite side of the bay. Leaving Safety Bay and Shark Island behind us, I steered our little skiff to the shore near Wood Grange, and, leaving the boat, we sought the shade of some cocoa-trees which grew near. The crow of a cock in the distance reminded us of a legend of my country, that the crowing of a cock indicates to the tired traveller an hospitable roof beneath which he can be sheltered and made welcome.

I saw that my wife was moved by the sound, and hastened to cover my own emotion by entering at once into the business of cutting shoots from the trees.

Having collected all that we required, we again stepped into the boat, and steered for Prospect Hill. I remembered a little bay, on which I determined to land, beneath the shade of some tall mangrove-trees, which grow chiefly on the sea-coast. The mangrove pushes forth from the roots long, dry branches, which cover the shore, and protect it from the fury of the waves.

We gathered several bundles of shoots from these trees, and then proceeded to our new farm.

The number of our sheep, goats, and fowls, had increased, and every thing appeared to be in order; but I was surprised to see that the creatures fled at our approach. The boys had a longing for some fresh eggs and some goat's milk; but, when they attempted to catch one of the goats, she butted at them, and kept them at a

distance. I contrived to throw a string around her legs, which brought her to a standstill, and, when they had fed her with potatoes and salt, my wife was able to milk her, and bring us two cocoanuts full of the sweet, fresh milk.

We found no difficulty in obtaining eggs; for, when my wife threw rice and oats to the hens, they rushed from their nests, and the boys gathered from them all that we required.

I had a wish to round Cape Disappointment before we returned, and to survey the coast immediately beyond; but the promontory maintained the character of its name, for we found that a long sand-bank, with hidden reefs and rocks, ran out a great way into the sea. On espying breakers ahead, we put about at once, and, aided by a light breeze, directed our course toward Whale Island.

Before we reached it, a singular spectacle presented itself at the end of the sand-bank. It appeared at first to be a ridge of black rocks; but, as I examined it more closely, I distinguished a troop of sea-dogs, seemingly at play, but roaring and barking at each other.

On arriving at Whale Island, I went to work at once, with the ready help of the boys, to plant the young shoots in this fertile spot; but, when this was accomplished, they were disinclined to do any thing but wander about to gather shells and coral.

"Father! mother! Come and look!" presently shouted Jack. "Come and see this enormous skeleton!"

"It is the whale, no doubt, my boy," I replied, laughing.

"No, no!" he cried. "This creature is longer, and much higher out of the water."

I was about to go to him when another voice called,

"Papa, papa, pray come! Here's a tremendous turtle: he's pulling me into the water. Pray come!"

This appeal was from Ernest; and, snatching an oar, I ran to his assistance. I found him holding by the foot a turtle of prodigious size.

We succeeded, after a while, in turning the creature on its back, though it was a huge specimen, fully eight feet

WALRUS AND SEAL.

long; and, it being now quite helpless, we left it, and went to inspect Jack's skeleton, which of course proved to be that of the whale.

The flesh had been so completely stripped from the bones, that they stood out clean and white; and I showed Jack our footprints, which were still visible on the sand about it.

"Can we not make some use of this mountain of bones?" asked Fritz.

"By and by, perhaps, when the waves and the sun have dried and whitened them. But we must get home before sunset, and I do not wish to leave behind that great green turtle, yet do not quite see how to take such a mass along with us."

"Why not make him tow us along, papa," said Fritz, "as we did the one we caught in the boat?"

In a few minutes we had emptied one of the fresh-water casks, and tied it with a strong rope to the forepart of the boat. The other end was fastened to the shell and fore-legs of the turtle, and, after turning him over, we hastily took our places in the boat.

Finding himself free, the turtle rushed into the water; but the rope attached to the water-cask prevented him from diving, and he could, therefore, only swim steadily to the opposite shore, taking our little skiff after him as if he had been a towing-boat.

Ernest laughingly declared that our new aquatic carriage was like Neptune's car, drawn by dolphins. I was able to guide the boat towards Deliverance Bay by striking the water with the oar to the right or left when I wished our sea-horse to turn in an opposite direction. We landed safely, and, after conducting the boat to its place of shelter, I was obliged to take the life of the turtle, for I feared his great size and strength would render it impossible for us to keep him a prisoner.

I wanted the shell also for another fountain, and the flesh was always an acceptable dish to us all. I resolved to set aside field-work till just before the next rainy season, and in the mean time fulfil my promise of finishing the loom for my wife.

My first efforts had produced but a rough machine, which, though it had answered for a time, was now almost useless.

In my young days I had visited the workshops of weavers, and knew something of other trades; which knowledge helped me greatly in our present position. To complete my task, I still required the particular paste or weaver's glue with which they cover the thread to prevent it from slipping, and, in default of it, I determined to try fish-glue. I had already contrived to make this gum clear and firm enough to be used as window-panes, and, as the windows were placed very deep in the rocky wall to keep out the rain, they served the purpose admirably.

At the repeated request of my boys, I had made two saddles and bridles, and a yoke. These I had constructed of light wood, and covered them with the skin of the kangaroo and the fur of the seal. To stuff them I used the long moss of the old trees to which the pigeons had introduced us; and the leather for bridles, I made soft and flexible by soaking it in oil.

This work occupied some days, during which we were again visited by a shoal of herrings, large numbers of which we gathered. These were followed by the sea-dogs, of which we gathered about twenty, for, although the flesh was too oily to be eaten, we had baited traps with it for crabs, and besides had found the skin, the fur, the bladder, and the oil, most useful to us.

The boys had several times petitioned me to take them on a hunting-expedition, and I consented to do so after we had made two large baskets for carrying grain, fruits, or roots, from the field. We gathered a quantity of willow-rushes, which grew on the borders of Jackal River, for our first attempt at basket-making.

The trial gave us experience; but I decided to keep the first two, which were coarse and strong, though not very shapely, for carrying dust and clay, and make larger and better ones of the Spanish canes. In this we were quite successful; and the boys, in their delight at seeing them completed, determined to give Frank a little ride. A bamboo-cane having been passed through the two handles on each side of the basket, Frank got in, while Ernest and Jack took an end of each pole on their shoulders, and, to the great delight of Frank, started off on a run.

"Could we not make a palanquin of this kind for mamma?" asked Frank.

"A suitable basket could certainly be made," I said; "but who is to carry it? We have no slaves here, as they have in India, and you, my boys, are not strong enough; besides, I should not like to trust your mother with bearers so young."

"But, papa, we have Storm and Grumbler, who go just as we direct. I am sure they would carry her carefully. May we try them with Frank?"

I gave the desired permission, and in a few moments Storm and Grumbler were saddled and bridled, and placed — one in front, and the other behind, the basket — between the two poles, the ends of which were firmly fastened on each side of their saddles. I would not, however, allow Frank to remain in the basket while his brothers were teaching the animals this new style of travelling; and besides, I knew that he had more power over Grumbler than either of his brothers. The boy, therefore, mounted the young ox, who was to take the lead, and Jack rode the buffalo behind. After a few runs, the animals seemed to understand what was required of them, the greatest difficulty arising from their unequal steps, which gave a jolting motion to the palanquin basket.

They assured me this would soon be overcome, when the animals had learned to trot and gallop in step. Ernest volunteered to seat himself in the basket, the obedient animals kneeling to enable him to step in, then rising, and starting off at a trot.

A slight swinging of the basket was not unpleasant: indeed, he lay back on the cushion as comfortably as if it had been a couch with an elastic seat.

But this steady pace did not long suit the riders of the animals: a touch of the whip sent them off at full gallop, and the ease and comfort of Ernest came to an end.

The basket swung from side to side so violently that he could not keep his seat, but was thrown to the right and left, while the riders sat firm in their saddles. In vain he screamed to them to stop. The boys had not strength to draw rein for laughing, and indeed it was amusing to see Ernest, sometimes sitting up, sometimes on his back with his legs in the air, jolting about in the most ridiculous manner.

At last the animals, of their own accord, came to a standstill, and kneeled to allow Ernest to alight, which he quickly did, looking very angry; but I explained to him that his brothers were only in fun, and the good-natured boy soon forgot his knocking about, and went to his mother for a handful of salt and barley to reward the tired animals after their exertions.

All idea of a palanquin for the mother was, however, set aside by circumstances which shortly occurred, and alarmed us greatly.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DREADFUL VISITOR.

I WAS sitting next day, with my wife and Fritz, in the shadow of some trees overlooking Jackal River, and talking of the improvements I hoped to make in the palanquin basket, when suddenly Fritz exclaimed, "Papa, what is that creature there in the distance? It looks like a thick cable rope, and seems to be coming nearer by rolling and twisting itself."

To my horror, I saw an enormous serpent rolling toward us on the sand, and raising itself sometimes, like the mast of a ship, to look around, as if for prey.

My wife, seeing my alarm, rushed into our rock dwelling, and I called out to the younger boys to follow her.

"What do you think it is?" asked Fritz as we stood together.

"I think it must be a serpent of frightful size," I replied. "We shall have a hard battle to conquer it."

"Then I will not be the last in the field," said my brave boy. "I must get my double-barrelled gun."

"Be prudent, my son," I said. "You had better join your brothers in the house, and get my largest gun in readiness. I will return for you when I see what can be done."

I went cautiously forward, and became sure that my worst fears were well grounded. That most dreadful of serpents, the boa-constrictor, was crossing the bridge at a

rapid rate. I rushed back to our cavern home, and, entering quickly and without noise, closed the door.

The young people were in warlike attitude and fully

BOA-CONSTRICTOR WATCHING FOR PREY.

armed. Fritz offered me his gun, and we placed ourselves at an open window, from which we could see without being seen.

The monster had already left the bridge behind him, and after a moment's pause, as if startled at traces of human beings, came rolling himself along in rings, or holding himself erect, till at length he placed himself just outside our hidden dwelling in the rock.

Ernest first, most probably from fear, fired his gun. Jack and Frank immediately followed his example, and, to my astonishment, their mother also. The four shots, although not one of them touched the creature, frightened him, for he began to roll away with great rapidity. Fritz and I both fired after him, but apparently with no effect, for he soon disappeared from our sight.

I regretted our failure bitterly, and, strictly forbidding the boys to leave the grotto without my permission, waited for three whole days in fear of our dread visitor. But he gave no sign of his presence, and we began to hope that he had left the marsh by a way unknown to us, through the rocks. But the half-wild ducks and geese were evidently aware of the presence of an enemy. They seemed to be in constant agitation. Returning every evening from their sail in the water, they would hover above their usual dwelling-place among the reeds, beating their wings, and uttering cries of fear, and finally would turn, and fly across the creek to Whale Island, to take up their night-quarters.

The creature was, without doubt, hidden among the rushes, and might at any moment attack us or the animals, if we ventured to leave the cave. My anxiety increased daily. We were at last relieved, though not without sad and distressing loss. As completely as Rome was saved by the geese, our garrison was now saved by the ass, our useful old Grizzle.

The store of hay was all gone by the third day, and on the morning of the fourth, Fritz and I decided to start for Falcon's Nest.

I stood giving my last injunctions to the boys, while my wife, who was entreating Fritz and myself to be cautious, opened the door, and old Grizzle, who had been shut up and well fed for three days, rushed from his stall, and, before we could stop him, galloped away towards Flamingo Marsh.

Our eyes followed him, and in a moment we saw the serpent raise his head from the rushes, spring with a bound, and instantly enclose him in the folds of his snaky form.

"Shoot him, papa! shoot him!" screamed the boys. "Do save our poor Grizzle!"

"Nothing can save the ass now, my boys, and firing would irritate the creature," I said, "and perhaps draw him on to attack us. It will soon be over; and while the monster sleeps, as he will after his meal, I will do my best to destroy him."

"Will he swallow his prey whole?" asked Fritz as we turned away from the painful sight.

"Serpents have no teeth," I replied; "but their fangs enable them to seize their prey, which they crush to death with the folds of their body. Even the bones are broken by this pressure, and I believe they lick their prey all over with the tongue, which contains a peculiar kind of moisture to soften every part, and make it easy to swallow."

I allowed a few hours to pass before attempting to interfere with our terrible enemy, then, accompanied by Fritz, directed my steps to the borders of the marsh. Jack followed cautiously behind, and Ernest kept us in sight, though farther away.

When at a distance of eighteen or twenty feet, both Fritz and I fired, and the shots seemed to have taken effect, for the upper half of the body and the jaws re-

mained immovable. But the lower part and the tail moved convulsively, striking out blindly in all directions. Two pistol-shots, however, finished the matter, and our joyful shouts of victory called all the family to us.

"I am glad the monster is dead," said Jack.

"Can we eat serpents?" asked Frank.

"No, no," replied his mother. "The flesh of a snake is poisonous."

"Not always," I remarked. "Except the head, which contains the poison, the flesh is eaten in some countries, I believe. And I have heard that some animals can eat serpents without being injured by the poison. I once read a story of pigs doing so, which greatly amused me."

"Tell it, papa!" they all exclaimed.

"On one of the large lakes of America, according to the story, there was a pretty little island on which no human beings could dwell, on account of the immense number of rattlesnakes with which it was infested. And it happened, at one time, that a vessel with a large cargo of living pigs was wrecked near the island. The crew contrived to reach the shore, and land themselves and their cargo; but it was impossible for them to remain, and as soon as the storm ceased, they repaired their vessel, and, leaving the pigs to their fate, with all speed made their escape.

"The forsaken animals dispersed themselves on the island, and in time their owner, coming with another ship, found, to his astonishment, that the pigs were in good condition, fat and well fed. They had eaten up the rattlesnakes, and the island was, from that time, completely cleared of these venomous creatures."

"How can people know the difference between the poisonous and the harmless serpents?" asked Fritz.

"Chiefly by the fangs," I said, "which they protrude

when alarmed or in danger. The creature rears his body to a great height, opens the glowing, red, upper-jaw so frightfully that the lower remains fixed, and displays two threatening fangs, which at other times lie concealed in a kind of bag behind the gums. These fangs are hollow, but so hard that they can easily penetrate the thick leather of a boot. And it is under these that the little bladder lies which contains the poison. A little drop pressed out, while the creature is using the fang, enters the wound, and spreads through the veins and over the entire system."

"What other poisonous serpents are natives of hot climates like this of ours?" asked Ernest.

"I could not possibly name all that are found in such countries as Africa and India," I replied. "Those most noted are the rattlesnake and the spectacled serpent, so called because the marks of the skin of the face resemble the bows of spectacles. These are very lively creatures, and exceedingly fond of dancing."

"Of dancing! How can creatures dance who have no feet?" cried Jack. "You are joking, papa."

"No, not in the least," I said. "The dancing consists of light playful movements practised in time to music, which Indian jugglers have cleverly taught the spectacled snake to perform. It is thought that, to a certain extent, the snakes are under the influence of a stupefying drug, and though some travellers affirm that they have seen the dancing-snake with the fangs still in the jaw, it is not known whether they have not been removed.

"I have heard that in South America the natives have a little instrument, which, when shaken, has the sound of a rattlesnake, and that by means of it they allure small animals, such as squirrels and rabbits, to their snares. But

we have talked long enough, my boys, and must not leave our dead enemy till the morning, for the birds will be only too glad to spoil the skin, which I should like to stuff."

"That will be capital, papa," said Ernest; and Fritz and Jack ran quickly to get the buffalo and ox. Our poor Grizzle had been but half swallowed by the monster, and I thought it might be possible to remove the dead body from the serpent, by yoking Storm and Grumbler to a rope fastened around its legs. This was soon arranged, and at a touch of the whip the animals started forward suddenly, and drew from the serpent's body the remains of our poor servant, which we at once laid in a deep grave.

"Some of you should compose an epitaph on poor Grizzle," I said, after we had buried him.

"Ernest must do that," exclaimed the brothers; but Ernest shook his head, and looked uncomfortable. So I left him to himself, and presently saw him seated alone, with his head on his hand, and his elbow on his knee.

In a little while he came to me saying, "Papa, I have written the epitaph. You won't laugh if I let you read it, will you?"

"No, certainly not, my boy," I said as I took the paper from him, and read as follows: —

> "Here lies an honest, industrious ass,
> Who once disobeyed his master's call,
> Which caused him a dreadful death, alas!
> Yet made him a hero; for by his fall
> He saved a family with children four,
> And father and mother, on this lone shore."

"The ideas are good, and the rhyme; but in the last line but one you have not the right number of feet. Try again, my boy. I am sure you can improve it."

He presently returned with the lines corrected thus: —

> "He saved from death, on this lonely shore,
> Father and mother and children four."

The lines were not bad for a boy of thirteen, and he looked much gratified when I took from my pocket a large red pencil which I used for marking wood, and wrote the verses on the rock,

My next performance, taking off the skin of the boa, required also the aid of our two useful animals, Storm and Grumbler. I began by cutting the skin around the throat, and after separating it from the flesh, and carefully turning it back, attached the ox and the buffalo by their harness to the trunk of the serpent, just above the neck. I then showed Fritz and Jack how to draw back the skin, while I led the animals gently forward.

It was rather a slow process; but we succeeded so well, that the beautiful skin was removed almost without injury. It was then steeped in salt water, cleaned with sand and ashes, carefully stuffed with horse-hair and wool, and left in the sun to dry.

The next day we hung it upon the branch of a tree, and, as there was difficulty in reaching the lower part near the tail, Jack volunteered to get inside in his bathing-dress, to fill the skin with moss and wool, and stamp it down with his feet. Two globes of gypsum-paste varnished with fish-glue served for eyes; and for the tongue we substituted a piece of iron wire, painted red with cochineal. And now arose the question, where we should place such an enormous creature to dry, and what position to give it in our museum.

After a little thought I decided to erect a strong pole, and place the stuffed serpent in coils around it. The

figure was so natural and lifelike, that the dogs growled at it, and Storm and Grumbler fled from it in terror. The boys attached a label to the mouth, on which was written,

"No Donkeys Admitted Here."

There was a double meaning in the words, as the figure was to stand at the entrance of our library.

Although the danger to which we had been exposed by the appearance of the serpent was over, I could not rest satisfied until I had searched the island, to learn whether any other of these creatures were to be found upon it.

This resulted in two excursions, — one to the marsh and duck-pond, the other to the country about Falcon's Nest. Jack and Ernest expressed a strong desire to remain at the grotto, but I overcame their fears, for I wished my boys to be brave and courageous in times of danger. I made them see how much safer and more at ease we should feel after exploring the region, and finding no trace of these creatures.

They were soon persuaded, and we started, carrying, in addition to our fire-arms, bamboo-canes and wooden planks for crossing the marsh.

In the crushed reeds and rushes we found many traces of the boa, but no signs either of young ones or eggs. Returning by the chain of rocks after a strict search, we came upon another grotto or cave, just where one end of the chain joined the marsh, and from it flowed a little stream of clear, sparkling water. Fritz and myself stepped in on a broad path beside the stream, and found that the ceiling and walls were formed of glittering stalactites.

The ground was composed of soft earth as white as snow, and I found, to my great satisfaction, that it was a mineral earth called "alumine."

"This will be of great use in washing our clothes," I said. "It is the earth used by fullers to cleanse wool before it is woven, and is one of the ingredients of soap."

The stream grew narrower as we advanced, and I found that it issued from a fissure in the rock at the back of the cave. As the stones about this point were soft, it was easy to remove them and make an opening.

Fritz produced his tinder-box and two wax candles, which we quickly lighted and stuck on our bamboo-canes. By their clear burning, I knew that the air was pure enough to allow us to enter.

Leaving Ernest and Jack outside, we crept through the hole, and found ourselves in a large, lofty hall with a vaulted roof.

"O papa!" exclaimed Fritz joyfully, "here is another salt-cavern. Look at the crystals."

"They cannot be salt," I replied, "or the water of the brook would taste of it. I am of opinion that this is a cave of rock crystals."

"Rock crystals, papa!" exclaimed the boy. "Then we have made a valuable discovery."

"Not more valuable here," I replied, "than was the bar of gold found by Robinson Crusoe to him."

"We can break off a little piece, however," he said, "to adorn our museum. See," he continued, as he separated a portion from the wall, "it comes off easily; but it is not transparent."

"No, Fritz; because you have destroyed the hexagonal shape. The real form of a rock crystal is a pyramid with six sides or faces, which form prisms, and admit the light. If this form is destroyed, it ceases to be transparent."

Our candles were now burning low, and we hastened to

return to the outer grotto, after having fired a pistol to observe its effect on the crystals. On reaching the outside, Jack startled me by throwing himself into my arms, sobbing and laughing together, as he exclaimed, "O papa, I'm so glad you have come! I heard a noise like thunder, and thought the cave had fallen in, and crushed you both."

"It was only the report of my gun, my dear boy. But why did not Ernest remain with you?"

"Oh! he's gone to that bed of rushes, and probably did not hear the noise."

I went with haste to look for the boy, and found him seated cross-legged, among the reeds, plaiting a curious kind of basket-work with striped and pointed rushes.

"Where are the fish for the basket you are making?" I asked.

"I've not been fishing," he answered; "but I've shot a young boa, about four feet long, I think. There he is, near my gun."

This rather alarmed me, for I knew, that, if this was a young serpent, there must be more on the marsh. A single glance relieved me. "Your boa," I said, "is a fine fat eel, which will provide us an excellent supper."

"Is it?" he said. "Then I have thrown a number into the water. I thought at first that they were worms; but I had great trouble to kill the large one. He kept moving, even after I cut off his head!"

"All these creatures have great tenacity of life," I said. "The worm species can unite the parts of their bodies after they have been cut apart by the spade. But we may as well go home now, and tell your mother of the discoveries we have made, and show her the fine eel you have killed."

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANOTHER EXCURSION.

SATISFIED now that the marshes and duck-pond were free from all traces of serpents, I proposed a second excursion to Wood Grange.

Joyful preparations began at once, and occupied us for nearly a week. The cart was stocked with provision for four weeks, together with our travelling-tent, cooking-utensils, tools, candles, torches for keeping off wild beasts at night, and plenty of arms and ammunition.

Thus equipped and provided, we started on the appointed day from Rock Castle. A seat for my wife was kept in the cart drawn by Storm and Grumbler, who also carried Jack and Frank on their strong backs. The cow was harnessed to the wheeled sledge, and Fritz, as a vanguard, rode a few paces ahead, on Lightfoot, while Ernest and I walked. It was arranged that, when tired, Ernest should take the place of Jack for a time, and that I should take turns with Fritz on the onager. At flank and rear were the four dogs and the jackal.

Traces of the boa were to be seen on our way to Wood Grange, and not far from the sugar-cane-groves; but before we reached Falcon's Nest, they had completely disappeared.

The poultry, goats, and sheep were in good condition and their numbers had increased. We threw some fodder to them, and they followed us for some distance.

Pushing on to Wood Grange, we also found the animals well and happy, and less wild and frightened than at our last visit. I decided to make this our halting-place for the night, and my wife prepared dinner, while the boys and myself strolled to the field to gather what cotton we could find, for pillows to use during our journey.

After dinner, we started out to explore the neighboring country more fully than we had done, and, for the first time, little Frank accompanied us, armed with a small gun. I turned to the left of Black Swan Lake, with Frank; Jack and Fritz took the opposite direction; and Ernest remained to assist his mother in gathering rice from the field by the lake.

Each party had with it a detachment of our light infantry. Turk and the hunter Jackal were with Fritz and Jack; Floss and Master Nip remained with Ernest and his mother; and Fawn and Brownie, the two young dogs, followed Frank and myself.

We kept, for the most part, close to the shore; and where we were unable to do so, on account of marshy ground covered with rushes, I sent in our four-footed companions, who started many aquatic birds, such as herons, woodcocks, and wild ducks, that flew to the lake, either to sport on its surface or soar above it.

A strange noise, somewhat resembling the braying of an ass, suddenly startled us, coming as it did from among the rushes.

"Papa, I believe it is our little onager Swift!" exclaimed Frank.

"Oh, no! The voice is too strong for so young an animal," I answered; "and, besides, he could not have followed us so quickly and so far without our seeing him. I think it is a bird called the Bittern."

"Then it is game, and I may shoot it," cried the boy. "It must be an immense bird to have such a voice as that."

"It can hardly be called game, for it is a species of heron, and the flesh is fishy and disagreeable; and the crying or whistling of birds does not depend upon their size, but on the form of the throat. The nightingale and the canary, you know, can sing very loudly. It is said, however, of the bittern, that it increases the volume of its voice by thrusting its beak partially into marshy ground, thus making a deep hollow sound that resembles the lowing of an ox."

So great was his anxiety to bring down a bittern by his first shot, that Frank scarcely listened. I sent the dogs to beat the rushes while he stood with his gun pointed, and his finger on the trigger.

There was soon a rustle among the reeds, a report of a gun, and a cry of joy as the young sportsman rushed in to seize his prey.

"I've hit a wild boar, papa," he cried, "bigger than the one Fritz shot."

"The agouti, you mean, Frank. But I hope you have not killed one of the pigs from the farm."

I had by this time reached the spot where the strange-looking animal lay dead. It much resembled a pig, but with a reddish brown skin and a pointed nose, and was evidently not a native of European countries.

Frank was almost beside himself with joy at his success. He tried to raise the animal from the ground to carry it to the tent to show to his brothers; but it was too heavy for him.

On closer inspection, I found that the creature was from three to four feet long, had incisor or cutting teeth, and

a divided upper lip, like a hare. These peculiarities, with the added fact that it was tailless, and that the toes were united by a membrane, convinced me that it was an amphibious animal of the cavy species.

We placed it on Brownie's back, and turned our steps homeward to the tent.

"Where have these disgusting animals been found?" I asked, seeing a large number of rats lying dead on the ground.

"Oh," said Ernest, "while mamma and I were gathering rice, I saw mounds, like mole-hills, rising a few inches above the ground around; and presently Master Nip, venturing near, drew from a hole in one of them a large rat. I ran to help him, and, after killing the rat, poked my stick into the nest, when out rushed at least a dozen rats.

"I knocked some with my stick, and some escaped into the water; but their cries brought a whole colony upon me, and they began to attack my legs in a most savage manner. Striking right and left, I killed several, but they were so furious that I cried out for help, for I did not know what the end would be; but Floss dashed in among them, and with one grip of the neck laid many of them dead at her feet, and scattered the rest."

I was very curious to see the nests, which I found to be similar to those of the beaver. "They are musk-rats," I said, "and belong to North America. Under the tail are two glands containing a fatty secretion, which, when stale, produces musk and is used as a perfume. They resemble the beaver in the cleverness with which they build their houses, and in having a bushy tail and webbed-feet."

We set about skinning them, and were thus employed when Fritz and Jack returned. Jack had in his hat about

a dozen beautiful eggs; and Fritz brought two heath-fowls, a cock and hen, in his game-bag. He also produced a small, pale, green fruit, and asked if it would be safe to taste it; but before I had answered, Nip crept around to my side, and, snatching one, rushed with it to a corner, where he devoured it greedily.

This was enough. The boys pounced merrily upon the fruit, and I could scarcely manage to save one for their mother and myself. The taste was most agreeable, and reminded me of the cinnamon or clove-apple.

It was growing late, and the boys looked tired: we therefore took up our night-quarters in the hut at Wood Grange, and on our bags stuffed with cotton slept peacefully till daybreak.

After an early breakfast, we continued our journey to the sugar-cane-grove, where, on a former visit, we had erected a kind of arbor of interlaced branches. It was in good condition, and instead of pitching our tent, we threw the sail-cloth over the top, and made a comfortable resting-place.

Fritz and Jack at once started with me for the sugar-cane-grove, for there was plenty of work to be done in the few hours we were to remain. I was thankful to observe no traces of the serpent's trail, and we were passing the canes, when what appeared to be a herd of little pigs passed before us. The perfect order in which they followed their leader was most remarkable. I was convinced that they were not European pigs; yet I could not help regretting, when the shots from my double-barrelled gun brought two of them to the ground.

Strange to say, the procession did not pause, but actually passed the dead bodies of their comrades with steady steps, and without breaking ranks. Fritz and Jack

fired also; and while the troop passed on, unmindful of their fallen companions, we shot down about a dozen of them.

On examining, I recognized in the animal a creature of the beaver tribe, called a "peccary," and as the flesh is considered palatable, Fritz and I at once carefully removed the musk-bag from each, without breaking it. By this means the flesh was preserved from a flavor that would have been very disagreeable.

All at once we heard the sound of two pistol-shots from the direction of our arbor, and, as I knew they must have been fired by Ernest and his mother, I sent Jack to tell them we had plenty of game, and desired him also to bring Storm and Grumbler with the cart.

Ernest presently appeared. "The troop passed our arbor," he said, "and mamma and I shot two, just by the bamboo-thicket."

On Jack's arrival with the cart, we placed the little pigs upon it, and returned to the arbor, beginning, after a hasty but substantial meal, the preparation of our new booty. The legs and sides were cut off and salted, then placed in sacks, and hung up on the branches of a tree, with calabash-vessels underneath to catch the drippings of salt and water which we frequently threw over them.

On the day following, the boys arranged to turn our arbor into a smoke-house, like the one we used for smoking herrings, and in this the salted joints were hung. I had proposed that one should be cooked whole, after the manner of the Otaheitans.

The boys began by digging a deep hole in the ground, and burning in it a great quantity of reeds, dry grass, and wood, in which were placed large stones, to remain until they were heated red-hot.

In the mean time Fritz cleaned and singed the little peccary, rubbed it with salt, and stuffed it with pieces of meat, potatoes, and other vegetables, chopped fine, and well seasoned. Not being able to obtain banana-leaves, I advised Fritz to wrap the animal in such leaves as he could find, and cover them with bark. It was then laid in the pit, and covered with hot cinders and glowing stones, over which earth was thrown till the pit was covered from sight.

After about two hours these were removed, and a most agreeable odor of roasted pork arose, mingled with the fragrance of spices; and presently the well-roasted pig was lifted out of its Otaheitan oven, and placed on the table.

I was a little puzzled to account for the aromatic flavor which our roast pig had gained until I remembered the bark used for wrapping it. It seemed to unite the flavor of the nutmeg with that of cloves and cinnamon, and I came to the conclusion that it was what in Madagascar is called "ravensara," which signifies *good leaf*. An oil is extracted from the leaves, which is useful in cooking.

As the smoke in the hut required attention for two days longer before the hams would be ready, my wife and one of the boys decided to remain near and attend to it, while the rest of us explored the neighborhood.

On our return at meal-times we generally brought with us some booty, and the welcome news that no trace of the boa could anywhere be found.

Among other things, we discovered a bamboo-thicket, containing reeds nearly sixty feet high, and thick in proportion. I managed to saw off a few of them near the first knot, for I hoped to make the hollow parts useful as light casks and tubs. Round the knots or joints grew

thorns, hard and sharp, which we gladly collected to use as a substitute for nails.

On our way to Prospect Hill one morning, we passed through Wood Grange, and I found, to my dismay, that the monkeys had again attacked the farm-buildings. The goats and sheep had wandered away, the fowls had become quite wild, and the stalls and poultry-houses were so broken and destroyed that I knew it would occupy several days to repair the damage. I put this work off, however, for, the hams being now sufficiently smoked, we wished to continue our excursion.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE GREEN VALLEY. — THE BEARS.

EARLY one morning our caravan set out, and after walking about two hours, we reached the proposed limits of our wanderings, at the outskirts of a small wood.

The spot was tolerably cool and well sheltered, the wood being bounded on the right by an overhanging rock, while at the left a river emptied itself into a large bay. The place appeared to be safe and convenient, and we began the necessary arrangements for a prolonged stay.

While dinner was preparing, I explored the immediate neighborhood with the boys, but found no enemies worse than wild cats hunting birds and badgers, and they fled at our approach.

The afternoon was very hot, and we employed the time in talking over our plans for exploring the broad plain, or

savanna, which we had seen on a former occasion from Prospect Hill.

I decided to take the three elder boys with me, that, as I laughingly said, we might have a strong force in case of danger. My wife and Frank were to remain at the tent, with the wagons and the animals.

We bade farewell to those we left behind, and started for the unknown land. Taking the narrow pass between the river and the rocks, we arrived at a spot from which the entire plain could be seen spread out before us. To the left, on the opposite shore of the stream, called by us "Eastern River," there stretched away to the distant horizon, a range of woods and forests, consisting of palms and other trees in full and splendid foliage.

Behind these rose steep, barren mountains, piled one above the other, their summits reaching the clouds, or clearly defined against the sky.

Leaving behind us the verdant plain, and continuing our way toward the mountain-range, we found the contrast increasingly perceptible. The grass was burned, and the land appeared dry and unfruitful.

"This country is greatly changed, papa," said Fritz, "since we were here last, and met with buffaloes."

"We have never travelled as far as this, Fritz," I said; "and besides, we saw the country last year soon after the rainy season, and before it had been exposed for months to the glowing heat of the sun. The soil is evidently rocky and sterile, and requires frequent rain to soften it so as to produce vegetation."

On we walked, notwithstanding the sighs and groans of the boys, who only opened their parched lips to find fault with the country, calling it the Sahara of the island.

At last, when quite overcome with heat and fatigue, we

reached a pleasant spot at the foot of a projecting rock, and threw ourselves down to rest in its welcome shade, and gaze in silence on the scene before us.

The blue mountains were clearly defined against the horizon, at a distance of twenty or thirty miles; while the river, looking in the distance like a thread of silver, wandered in serpentine courses through the broad plain.

We had not been resting long when Master Nip, with most ridiculous grimaces began to smell about in all directions. Then, screaming hideously, he started off at full gallop toward the rocks, followed by the dogs.

I supposed that he had discovered a troop of monkeys, but we were too much overcome with heat and thirst to follow them. We had, besides, just produced our provisions, and were too busily engaged to move.

Presently Fritz, who had his eyes fixed on something in the distance, exclaimed, —

"Papa, what is that yonder in the valley? It appears to me like a man on horseback. And there is another, and a third," he added; "and now they are all in full gallop. Can they really be the Arabs of the desert?"

"No, certainly not," I replied with a laugh. "But take my telescope, and tell me what you can make of this strange sight."

"It is strange, papa," said the boy. "The moving objects look like herds of cattle, high-loaded wagons, or wandering haystacks. What can it all be?" His brothers looked in turn through the glass; and both Ernest and Jack declared the great moving objects to be men on horseback.

I took the telescope myself, and discovered at a glance that the figures were gigantic ostriches.

"O papa!" cried Jack, as I stated my conviction, "a living ostrich! Wouldn't it be delightful to ride one, and to have beautiful feathers for our hats?"

The birds were evidently approaching us, and I desired Fritz and Jack to call in the dogs, and search for the monkey, while Ernest and myself concealed ourselves. After a long search they returned. Master Nip had scented water, and the party had refreshed themselves with a bath and filled their water-flasks.

All this time the ostriches were drawing nearer. There were five, one of them a male bird, as was shown by the large and beautiful tail-feathers.

"We must not startle them," I said, "lest they begin to run. We could never expect to overtake birds of such fleetness. Fritz's eagle might rival them by flying as swiftly as they run; but no horse could gallop so fast."

"How, then, do the Arabs catch them?"

"Sometimes on horseback, but oftener by stratagem. When he finds himself pursued, the ostrich will run for hours in a circle of immense circumference, and the hunter keeps within the circle, but still follows, till the creature flags from fatigue, then, crossing the circle, he makes the capture."

"Is it true that the ostrich buries his head in the sand, and then fancies no one can see him?" asked Ernest.

"It is said so, and I think with some truth. But hush! do not move. The birds are very near us."

Coming upon us so suddenly, they appeared to be startled; but as we stood still, and held back the dogs, they took courage to approach, raising their arched necks, and gazing with surprise at the unaccustomed spectacle.

Unfortunately, the impatient dogs escaped from our hold, and rushed, yelping and barking, upon the ostriches. Away they flew like the wind, seeming scarcely to touch the ground with their feet. But Fritz had uncovered the eyes of his eagle when the birds were first alarmed, and set him free to follow them.

The beautiful male bird, being a little in the rear, was quickly pounced upon by the eagle, who, with one blow of his beak, brought the creature to the ground. We were too late to save its life, for the jackal and the dogs were quickly upon it, and we arrived at the spot only in time to gather up a few of the most beautiful feathers.

"What a pity to kill such a beautiful creature!" said Fritz. "I am sure he could easily have carried two of us on his back. Why, he must be six feet high, at least; and his neck would measure three feet more."

"What can these creatures get to live upon in the desert, I wonder?" said Ernest. "Nothing grows there."

"It is said that the ostrich digests any thing, even stones," I replied; "but his usual food consists of plants and shrubs. Yet most animals that inhabit the barren regions of a desert can live for days without food. The camel, as you know, has a kind of second stomach, in which he carries a sufficient supply of water to last for many hours."

While continuing our walk towards a valley which I had seen in the distance, Ernest and Jack turned aside to follow the movements of the jackal, who was like the dogs in his habits, and seemed now to make himself their leader. All at once they stood still by some withered shrubs, and beckoned to us to join them.

"Ostriches' eggs! ostriches' eggs!" cried the boys, throwing their hats in the air as we overtook them; and at their feet, in a hole in the sand, exposed to the sun, lay twenty eggs as large as a child's head.

"That is a glorious discovery!" I said; "but do not disturb the order in which the eggs are laid, or perhaps the mother will forsake them."

"What could we do with so many eggs?" asked Fritz.

"Oh, I know," cried Jack. "Take them home with us, and lay them in the sand, to be hatched by the sun."

"That is more quickly said than done," I remarked. "Those eggs would weigh more than twenty pounds, and who is to carry them? Besides, the ostrich only leaves her eggs during the day; at night she sits on them herself, covering them carefully."

The boys begged me to let them take home two eggs, to show to their mother. I cautiously lifted two from the top, and, to enable the boys to carry them easily, tied each in a piece of cloth, like a stone in a sling, and fastened the cloth by a string, so that it hung loosely from the hand, and could be carried without danger of breaking.

We also set up in the sand a cross made of two pieces of the heath-stem by which to find the nest easily when we should come again.

There were signs of strange animals, such as buffaloes, antelopes, and onagers, but no traces of the serpent.

A little farther on we reached a spot which in this sterile region proved truly refreshing. A little spring flowed from the rock, forming a tiny brook, and we seated ourselves by its side, filled our water-flasks, and thoroughly enjoyed the brief rest.

While we were doing so, the jackal, scratching in the ground, brought to our notice some small land-turtles of the kind which live in marshy ground, or near fresh water, and the boys contrived to take two of them along with them.

Starting again, we came presently upon a green and fruitful valley. Herds of buffaloes and antelopes could be distinguished grazing peacefully in the distance, and but for the dogs we might without doubt have approached nearer to them.

In less than an hour we were near the place where Fritz had caught the young jackal. Ernest, pale with fatigue, crept on in front of the party, with the dog Fawn, to a rocky cave which appeared in the distance, while we followed slowly, though we longed for its cool shelter. A cry of terror, the bark of the dogs, and a low growl, suddenly startled us, and, pale as death, Ernest rushed to me, exclaiming, —

"Don't go in, papa! There's a bear in the cave; and look, he's coming out!"

I placed my arm for a moment about the trembling boy; then let the dogs loose, and, gun in hand, rushed toward the cave, followed by Fritz. To my horror we were met at the entrance by an enormous bear, which the dogs

were attacking furiously; and within the cave was another.

Fritz set himself bravely to do battle with the latter, while I prepared to meet the first.

Our first shots, fired together, though they wounded the bears, were not mortal, and I hesitated to fire again, lest I should injure the dogs.

I saw that I had broken the under-jaw of one, and that Fritz had wounded the other in the fore-paw, so that they had lost some of their natural strength, if not of their courage.

The pain of their wounds and the attacks of the dogs rendered them furious; and their struggles to defend themselves, added to their loud growling and the yelping of the dogs, made the scene truly fearful.

Making a sign to Fritz to follow, I went forward, and, choosing a moment when the creatures were occupied with the dogs, shot one through the head, while the ball fired by Fritz passed through the heart of the other.

"God be praised!" I earnestly exclaimed as they fell dead at our feet. "We have escaped a great danger. Had these animals discovered us in our home, they might have found us unprepared to meet them."

"Are they not useful, now that they are dead?" asked Jack presently.

"Yes, my child, very useful. The flesh is much esteemed, and the fur forms a most valuable article of commerce. The color, you observe, is a shining silver gray; they probably belong to the species met with by Captain Clark, and called the 'silver bear.'"

It was impossible for us to carry home our booty, and we proceeded to protect it as well as we could from jackals and other beasts of prey, by covering it with branches,

and piling thorn-bushes and prickly leaves at the entrance to the cave, after we had dragged it farther in.

The ostrich eggs were also left buried in the sand, for it was growing late, and the boys did not wish to be burdened with their weight.

A glad welcome awaited us at the tent, where we arrived a little after sunset. The mother and Frank had gathered wood for our watch-fires, and prepared supper.

During our absence they had discovered a path through the bushes to the foot of a rock, where they had found a peculiar kind of white lime or pipe-clay, of which my wife thought we might make cups and saucers, and plates. They had also met with bamboo-cane suitable for pipes for carrying the water which flowed fresh and sparkling from the rock.

"A hole might be dug in the ground," added my wife, "to which the water could be conducted, and be an inestimable boon to our animals. I broke off a piece of the rock, and with that and the white clay have constructed a fireplace for cooking."

"And papa," said Frank, "some of the pieces of white clay looked like glass after they were burned."

"Like glass?" I said. "I will try it when the watch-fires are lighted." He watched me earnestly as I softened the white clay and rolled it into two balls, which I then placed in the hot cinders of the watch-fire. "We must leave them all night, Frank," I said, "and perhaps we may find two pretty glass balls in the morning."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE EXPEDITION OF THE BOYS.

WAKING my sleeping household early, I proceeded to examine the pipe-clay balls. They had become hard and glazed, but, owing to the great heat, were brittle; and cups and saucers made thus would have been useless.

After breakfast and our morning prayer, we harnessed the animals to the cart, and started for the bears' cave.

Fritz, who was a little in advance, no sooner came in sight of the entrance, than he cried out, "Make haste! make haste! Here is an immense flock of turkeys. One of them is parading in front of the cave as if he were a sentinel."

This sentinel-bird was very large, with a bright red comb on his head, and lappets of the same color under his throat. He had a long beak, and a collar of white feathers about his neck, falling upon a purple-red breast. Other and smaller birds were inside, driving him back with loud cries and rustling wings.

We had been watching this amusing spectacle for some minutes, when a rushing sound of flapping wings in the air startled us. Looking up, we saw an enormous bird descending to the cave. Fritz fired; and the bird, falling heavily, struck his head against the rock, and broke his neck.

The dogs, who had been held in leash, broke loose at

this, and rushed into the cave, putting to flight the birds inside, which rose slowly in the air, followed by the majestic watcher. Fritz fired again, but the ball passed him unhurt; and the bird, which was evidently the king vulture, soared majestically to the clouds, and was soon out of sight.

Two, however, remained, as the result of Fritz's gun-shots, — one which much resembled a turkey; and the large one, which, by its size, I imagined must be a condor, for it measured sixteen feet from its beak to the tip of its tail.

Entering the cave, I found that only the eyes and the tongue of one of the bears had been meddled with. Assisted by the boys, I began at once to skin and cut up the animals, and prepare the flesh by salting, which occupied two whole days, during which we had erected our tent outside the cave. At the end of that period we loaded the cart with the skins and the salted flesh, and journeyed to Prospect Hill, that the latter might be smoked in the arbor. This was more especially necessary for the hams, which were large, and we hoped would prove equal to the boar hams of Westphalia. The birds of prey were totally unfit for food, as birds which feed on carrion always are; but we plucked them and cleansed the feathers.

I had always regretted that the tree should grow so far away from which we obtained the bark that gave the aromatic flavor to the roasted peccary. However, I told the boys that I had seen, in this neighborhood, several bushes which I believed were the pepper-plant.

Clusters of berries, somewhat like currants, but not so large, grew on these bushes; but the clusters being fuller, and the berries closer to each other, they bore a greater

resemblance to bunches of grapes, though the fruit varied greatly in color; some being red, and some green or white. The boys readily promised to assist in collecting young shoots to plant at Falcon's Nest, as well as at other places, on our return home.

The boys had been for some time anxious to go about the island by themselves, but I could not spare them until the hams and other portions of the bears had been smoked and dried, so as to be fit to add to our stores.

This being at length done, I told them they might prepare for their journey. When the time really came, Ernest held back, and asked to be allowed to remain at home, while Frank begged me to let him accompany Fritz and Jack.

Lightfoot, Storm, and Grumbler were saddled; the three riders sprang to their seats, waving their hands in farewell, and looking happy and delighted.

"We must learn to trust them to their own resources," I said as my wife and I saw them ride away, accompanied by their dogs. "They are growing manly and strong. I could even now, if needful, trust you and his three brothers to the care of Fritz."

While examining the rock at the back of the bears' cave, during their absence, I discovered a number of long asbestos-threads, that I knew when melted would form talc, which I could make valuable for window-panes, it being clearer and more transparent than the fish-glue I had used for the windows of our rock house.

As the evening approached, my wife placed on the stone fireplace a pot containing two of the salted bears' feet to stew for supper, and we seated ourselves, to wait with anxiety and impatience the return of our boy-hunters. Hearing at last the clatter of approaching hoofs and

distant sounds of joyful cheering, I went to meet the riders.

Like military hussars, they slackened rein when they saw me, sprang from their chargers, and took off the saddles, leaving the animals free to enjoy the sweet grass and the fresh water from the brook, then hastened to join their mother at the tent.

Jack and Frank carried each a young kid across his shoulders, while the movement in Fritz's game-bag gave the impression that it contained something alive.

"The chase forever, papa!" cried Jack, "the chase forever! And what splendid fellows Storm and Grumbler are to run over level ground! They so tired the little creature we followed, that we were able at last to catch it with our hands."

"Yes, papa!" exclaimed Frank. "And Fritz has two such pretty rabbits in his bag. And we were very near bringing you some honey, mamma, only we stopped to hear the cuckoo."

"Ah, but you forgot the best!" cried Fritz. "We met a troop of antelopes, and they were so tame we might have brought one home easily, had we wished."

"Ah, stay, my boy," I said; "*you* have forgotten the best, — the goodness of God in bringing you safe home. But presently you must give us an account of your journey, from the beginning."

The boys ran hastily to refresh themselves by bathing their faces and hands, and removing the game-bags and arms from their girdles. The story of their day's adventures was then begun by Fritz.

"When we left this morning," he said, "we proceeded at a quick trot through the green valley, and soon reached the narrow defile between the rocks and the river, coming

presently to a slight elevation, from which we could see a large extent of country. From this point we noticed a herd of pretty animals; but I could not tell whether they were goats, antelopes, or gazelles. A thought struck me that we might drive them along the bank of the river towards Wood Grange.

"We separated, placing ourselves at different points, and holding back the dogs. Frank was to keep along the bank of the river; Jack placed himself at a distance from him; and I, mounted on the onager, stood at a point opposite Jack. We advanced cautiously toward the pretty creatures, many of which, on seeing us, started off at a rapid pace. Then they became confused, and stood close together, staring at us wildly. At that moment we let the dogs loose, and galloped after them at full speed ourselves. The animals turned from us towards the narrow defile, as we intended they should, for we had placed ourselves at these different points to oblige them to do so.

"I wanted to drive them to Wood Grange, and knew this could only be done by making them prisoners in the defile. We tied a piece of string, at about four feet from the ground, across the whole breadth of the pass, and upon it fastened the ostrich-feathers from our caps and some pieces of old rags from our game-bags. The wind blew them wildly about, so that, when the animals attempted to go back, they were alarmed, and turned to proceed, as I wished, towards Wood Grange; for on one side was the water, opposite to it ourselves, the dogs at various points, and behind them these alarming-looking feathers and rags. And therefore, papa, as they could only go forward, I have really succeeded in attracting them to our farm."

"Well done, my boy! The idea was a clever one. But tell me," I said, "what made you think of it?"

"In a book named 'Travels in South Africa,' by Captain Levaillant, a naturalist, I read an account of the methods adopted by the natives of the Cape of Good Hope to tame antelopes, by bringing them into association with other animals: so I thought I would try the experiment."

"I am glad you remember what you read, Fritz," I replied. "But where did you find the rabbits? and how do you propose to keep them? Rabbits multiply so quickly, that our fields and gardens would soon be overrun with them."

"Ah, but you forget, papa," replied the boy. "We have two small islands on which these pretty little creatures could live without being the slightest trouble to us, and we should not only have their flesh as an additional store of food for our table, but their fur also."

"You are quite right, Fritz," I said. "Have you brought living rabbits?"

"Yes, papa; two. We saw a number of them scampering about, and I sent up my eagle. He brought me three, —two alive, and one dead."

"Papa," said Jack, "isn't it my turn to speak now? I want to tell you what Frank and I did."

"Of course, Jack," I replied, smiling. "How did you bring down those beautiful little kids?"

"In a gallop, papa. Frank and I together. Fritz was at some distance away, following the rabbits, and we rode slowly behind him. The dogs were sniffing about in a restless manner over the thick grass, and presently they started two animals that we took for hares. Oh, how they did run and spring! But we kept them in sight

and followed, on Storm and Grumbler, at full gallop, sometimes even leaving the dogs behind. In about a quarter of an hour they lost breath, and fell panting on the ground. We sprang off our saddles, drove back the dogs, and found that, instead of hares, the creatures were two beautiful little fawns. We lifted them in our arms, slung them on our shoulders, and rode back to Fritz. And that is the history of our hunting exploits."

"A very successful one," I replied, "if you take care of the little creatures and can tame them. I do not think they are fawns, however, but a kind of dwarf antelope. And now tell me, Jack, what has made your face so inflamed and swollen! One would think you had been attacked by a swarm of mosquitoes."

"No, papa," replied Jack, laughing. "I got my wounds by meddling. We were trotting slowly home, when I noticed a bird that flew past us to a tree with a whirr and a rustle of the wings, and waited till we came up to fly off again to another tree. Fritz thought it was the honey cuckoo, which attracts the attention of travellers, as if wishing to inform them that honey could be found in a tree close by.

"Frank and I were quite ready to be attracted; and the bird presently alighted on a tree, ceased its song, and stood still. We stopped also, and, after examining the tree, found a bees' nest in the hollow trunk not far from the ground. We all talked about what we ought to do to get some of the honey, but in our wisdom there was very little common sense; for, when Fritz at last proposed that we should suffocate the bees with sulphur, I lighted a match, and threw it into the tree, never thinking of stopping up the hole.

"In a moment, of course, the bees were upon me. They

attacked my face and hands, and some even got into my hair. I could only leap upon my buffalo, and gallop away from my enemies. I touched my face with wet earth, as soon as I got clear of them; but it still burns and smarts terribly."

"You have plenty of courage, my boy," I said, "but very little caution. Go now to your mother: she will bathe your face with something to cool it and allay the pain."

After the antelope-kids and the rabbits had been cared for, I showed the boys the discovery I had made, among the rocks in the bears' cave, of a species of asbestos, and explained to them the great advantage it would be to us to make talc for window-panes; but they scarcely looked at it, and were much more interested when the mother called them to supper. The odor from the bears' feet was very tempting; but they bore such a resemblance to human hands as they lay on the dish, that Jack exclaimed, in the words of the ogre in "Jack and the Beanstalk," —

"Fe-Fi-Fo-Fum! I smell the flesh of an Englishman!"

His mother was shocked at the suggestion; but the boys were glad enough to enjoy the tempting morsels, in spite of Jack's remark. After we had finished, the watch-fire was lighted, and we retired to our tent.

I aroused my children early, as I intended that there should be at least one more excursion before returning to Rock House, where many arrangements had to be made in preparation for the approaching rainy-season.

We had worked well thus far. The flesh of the bears had been salted and smoked, the fat melted down, and we had a large number of bamboo-canes; but I wished to discover whether the ostrich had deserted the eggs we had left in the sand, and to obtain a supply of gum from the

euphorbia, or purple-flowering spurge. On our last expedition, I had noticed this gum oozing from the trunk of one of these trees, and knew it would be useful in many ways.

Fritz gave up his onager to me and rode the foal, little Swift, which promised to become a clever courser. Ernest remained at home to help his mother; for the quiet, indolent boy took very little interest in these fatiguing excursions. Frank gladly joined us: he was a spirited little fellow, and as fond of enterprise as Jack.

We set out with the two old dogs, leaving Fawn and Brownie as a body-guard to those who remained at the tent. Jack rode the buffalo, and Frank the young ox. Taking the direction we had followed on our first visit to Wood Grange, we came presently to the marshy ground where Fritz had caught the turtle. Here we filled our water-flasks, and, proceeding onwards, arrived shortly at the rising ground from which we had seen the ostriches.

We had given it the name "Arabian Watch-tower," because Fritz had mistaken the birds for Arabs on horseback.

I allowed Jack and Frank to press forward on a gallop, on condition that they should not allow me to lose sight of them. Fritz and I remained to collect the gum of the euphorbia-tree which grew at this spot. On discovering the tree, I had made incisions in the bark, from which gum had flowed abundantly, and the hollow of a bamboo-cane received and carried it.

As we continued, we saw our advance-guard at a great distance in front, but still in sight, on the broad level plain. Presently Fritz said, —

"Papa, did you not tell me this gum was poisonous? Why have you gathered such a quantity?"

"I mean to use it to destroy the apes if they again

attack the farm," I replied, "as well as the insects that injure the trees and vegetables."

We trotted on quickly after our cavaliers, who had halted within sight of a number of ostriches. Fritz, who wished very much to capture a living ostrich, had the forethought to tie firmly the beak of his eagle, so that, should he let the bird free to bring down one of the ostriches, he would be unable to injure it. The creatures were coming towards us, and, hastily dismounting, I gave up the onager to Fritz, that he might be able to follow the fugitive more speedily.

He was only just in time. Four magnificent birds were approaching us with almost incredible swiftness, followed by the two young riders, who, accompanied by the dogs, were driving the poor animals towards us. They were close within gunshot before they perceived us, and Fritz sent up his eagle, which at once pounced upon the head of the nearest ostrich, but, in consequence of his bound beak, he could only beat his wings on the creature's back, without hurting him.

This, however, so confused and alarmed the bird, that he could not defend himself, nor continue his flight. Jack quickly threw the lasso, but instead of catching only the legs, as he intended, entangled the string in the wings. The bird fell at once to the ground, and the boys set up shouts of joy as they ran to the spot. Fritz called off his eagle, and drove away the dogs, while I lost no time in endeavoring to set the wings free, and to tie the legs. The struggles of the bird were fearful, and the violence with which he kicked right and left with his entangled legs made us fear to approach him. I had begun to despair of making him a prisoner, when happily I thought of covering his eyes by throwing my handkerchief over his head.

The struggles ceased the moment I did so, and I rushed up quickly to tie it around the neck. We had no further trouble; all resistance ceased, and I was able to fasten about his body a broad piece of dog-fish skin with two openings for the tips of the wings, and on each side of this to attach a piece of strong cord, that we might lead him. I also tied the two legs together with a cord of sufficient length to allow him to run fast, but not to make his escape.

"Do you remember having read of the manner in which the natives of India secure the newly-captured elephants?" I asked the boys.

"Oh, yes!" cried Fritz. "They bind the wild animal with strong leading-reins between two tame elephants, and also fetter its trunk."

"All right," replied Jack, laughing; "but we ought to have two tame ostriches to lead this one, and where are we to find them?"

"True, my boy," I replied with a laugh; "but must they be ostriches? Have we not Storm and Grumbler?"

"O papa," cried all the boys, "that is a famous plan! it is sure not to fail."

I led Storm and Grumbler, one on each side of the animal, who still lay on the ground; and added to the strings which I had fastened to the skin of the dog-fish two leading-reins, one of which I attached to the bridle of Storm, and the other to the horns of Grumbler. Then Jack and Frank mounted, and sat firmly waiting for what would follow.

Removing the handkerchief from the bird's eyes, I placed myself at a little distance to observe the result. For some moments he remained without moving, as if sulky; then with a sudden spring rose to his feet, and, seeing no obstacle in his way, darted forward so quickly that the

sudden jerk of the reins brought him on his knees. He was soon up again, and began to struggle violently, rushing right and left, in vain attempts to escape. But the strong necks of Storm and Grumbler were proofs against all these efforts, and, after one more attempt to beat his confined wings, he gave way, and sank again to the ground.

After a few minutes' rest, a slight touch of the whip brought the captive to his feet, and, as Storm and Grumbler at the same moment moved forward, he seemed inclined to accommodate himself to their steps, and was completely subdued. The boys put their coursers into a gallop, and Fritz and I followed, greatly amused to observe how the strides of the ostrich, which were limited by the length of the string attached to his legs, were still long enough to enable him to keep up easily with the gallop of Storm and Grumbler.

After a long run, I told the boys to draw rein, and walk on slowly with their prisoner to the Arabian Watch-tower, and wait for us there. Fritz and I then turned our steps to the spot in which we had left the eggs of the ostrich. I had brought with me a bag and some cotton-wool to wrap them in. On reaching the place, we found evident signs that the hen-bird had been sitting on her eggs, and it raised joyful hopes in our minds that we might very soon find little ostrich-chicks running about, which the heat of the sun by day, and the mother's care at night, had brought into existence.

We only took possession, therefore, of a few, leaving the rest to the mother's care; and after packing our fragile treasures in the cotton-wool, and placing them in the bag, I mounted Swift with the eggs in front of me, and started to rejoin the boys and their captive. From thence we at

once proceeded to the tent at the bears' cave, and, passing through the green valley on our way arrived safe, rather earlier than we were expected.

The admiration expressed by my wife when she saw the new arrival was quickly turned to anxiety.

"I shall want you to discover an iron-mine next, if your new companion can swallow iron, as I suppose he can from what I have heard. And, my dear boys," she exclaimed, addressing Jack and Frank, "how do you suppose we are to feed that enormous creature? and where is he to live? I cannot see that he will be of any possible use."

"Mamma, I will teach him to carry me on his back," exclaimed Jack, "as Storm does. And some day, if we find that our island is joined to Africa or South America, I shall be able to get to these places in a few days, and bring back all sorts of news. He flies like the wind, and his name ought to be Hurricane; and Ernest shall have Storm, if only I may learn to ride the ostrich."

"But, papa," said Frank, almost in tears, "ought Jack to have the ostrich all to himself? You know I helped to hunt him, and Fritz's eagle brought him down."

"Very good," I said; "but in that case, as the unfortunate bird belongs to all three of you, it must be divided into three parts. The head belongs to Fritz, because that was the part which the eagle seized, and you and Jack must each have half of the body, which was tied to the animals you and he rode, with the one wing and one leg."

This caused a laugh amongst the boys, and I settled the matter in this way: "If Jack succeeds in taming the creature," I said, "and teaching him to receive a rider on his back, and to answer the movements of the bridle, like a horse, then I am sure he will deserve to consider the animal his own, as a reward for his exertions. From

this time, therefore, he is responsible for the training of the ostrich."

It was now too late to resume our journey; but I untied the leading-reins from Storm and Grumbler, and set the prisoner free, to place him in safety for the night. With the assistanee of the boys, I fastened the leading-reins around the stems of two trees, between which the ostrich could stand or lie down as he wished, but could not escape.

The rest of the day we employed in packing, for removal to Rock House, the many valuable things we had discovered during these excursions.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE OSTRICH-TRAINER.

WE rose early to proceed on our way; but the ostrich was still so untamed, that we were obliged again to fasten him between Storm and Grumbler. On this occasion the whole household was included, as we intended to travel to our home at Rock Castle by way of Wood Grange and Falcon's Nest. Storm and Grumbler being in charge of the ostrich, we harnessed the cow to the cart, which was loaded with the tent and the recent discoveries. Room was left for my wife to ride, while Jack and Frank rode Storm and Grumbler. I mounted Lightfoot, and Fritz was seated on Swift, the foal.

We stopped for a day or two at the farm, to repair the house and stalls, so as to render them more safe from wild beasts, and more ready for our own accommodation when we should need to revisit the spot.

The flock of antelopes had settled themselves comfortably in the park-like spot, adding greatly to the beauty of the scenery. The number of pigs, goats, and poultry had increased, and we saw with pleasure the little kids, pigs, and chickens running about, rather shy of our approach, though not so wild as on our first appearance, after the inroads of the apes.

On arriving with our various acquisitions at our grotto home in the rock, my wife's first care was to throw open the doors and windows to admit the fresh air. The ostrich was tied between two bamboo-canes in front of the dwelling, where I determined he should remain until he became quite tame.

Those of the ostrich eggs which we fancied contained young birds were wrapped in wool, and laid in a drying-oven, held at a certain heat by the aid of a thermometer, in the hope that they might be hatched.

A hutch was constructed for the Angora rabbits, and a comfortable nest of cotton-wool and straw, after which, to their apparent delight, they were taken to Shark Island.

My next care was for those gentle, graceful creatures, the antelopes. They were evidently unhappy and fretting in the confinement of Rock House; but, for fear of the dogs, we could not set them free.

We hastened, therefore, to take them to Whale Island, after having erected a shelter for them, and it was a pleasure to witness their delight when they found themselves able to spring and bound as they pleased. A store of food was left on both islands, to supply the animals till they had become used to the spot, and knew how to provide for themselves. These arrangements occupied us for the whole of two days.

One of the little tortoises found at Wood Grange I

brought with me to Rock House, intending to place it in our vegetable garden to destroy the snails and insects; but, fearing the creature might also eat the young plants, I sent Jack to place it among the rushes near the duck-pond.

He had not been absent long, when we heard loud calls from the neighborhood of the marsh. "Fritz, Fritz, come and help me! Make haste! And bring a bamboo-cane with you."

I wondered what could be the cause of this commotion. Presently, to my surprise, the three boys appeared, in high glee, carrying a net in which was imprisoned a magnificent eel. On the previous day, Ernest had secretly laid two nets; and one of them contained the delicious fish, of which the mother at once took charge, promising to cook a portion of it for our dinner. The remainder was to be boiled in salt and water, and rubbed with butter, to preserve it.

The veranda or balcony, which we had partly erected while building the pigeon-house, stood in front of our home in the rock. It was formed of tall, slender bamboo-canes, and the beams of the roof, which sloped from the rock, were attached to a long thick plank which rested firmly on the canes. At the foot of the bamboo supports I planted young shoots of the vanilla and pepper, as well as other creeping plants which could be trained around them; not only to improve the aspect of our rock house, but also to form a pleasant shade during the hot weather.

Hens and chickens brought from the farm were kept in a coop, and fed daily with barley and crumbs, my wife having placed them in a shady spot under her own eye, lest Master Nip or the jackal might be inclined to make some unfortunate experiments in anatomy.

The bears' skins were laid in the sea near the shore, to purify them, and under great stones, to prevent them from being carried away by the waves or dragged from their position by sea-crabs.

The skins of the musk-rats still emitted a powerful odor; and tying them together, we hung them in the open air under the roof of the veranda, that the interior of the dwelling might be free from the smell.

The condor and the vulture were placed in the museum, to be stuffed during the rainy season, when work out of doors would be impossible. I also brought in the pipe-clay and asbestos. With the former I hoped to make china vessels and window-panes, and of the latter, wicks for our lamp. Every edible article had been given to my wife to add to the stores; but the gum of the euphorbia I took charge of myself, wrapping it carefully in paper, on which I wrote POISON, as a warning to my boys.

These arrangements employed us two days; and now several duties presented themselves, all apparently of equal importance, — the cultivation of an acre of land to receive wheat, barley, and maize, the taming of the ostrich, the management of the ostrich's eggs, and the preparation of the bears' skins.

We decided that the field cultivation was the most important; and the animals, being now accustomed to the yoke, were made useful in drawing the plough. But the ploughshare was a light one, and did not turn up the earth deep enough, and we had, therefore, to dig, hoe, and work with all our strength. It was not possible to follow this laborious employment during the heat of the day; we therefore worked in the morning two hours, and two in the evening.

During the intervals of rest I had noticed that our poor captive, the ostrich, appeared untamable. I was therefore compelled to use the means adopted in taming the eagle, and stupefy him with the fumes of tobacco.

The powerful effect it had rather alarmed me, for he fell to the earth, and remained for some time motionless. When at last he raised his head, I lengthened the string, that he might get up and walk around the bamboo-canes to which he was tied. My wife then brought all kinds of nourishment which she thought the creature would eat; but although subdued, and evidently mourning over his fate, the poor captive refused every thing that was offered him for three whole days, and became so feeble and weak that we feared he would die.

As a last resort she made balls of crushed maize mixed with butter, one of which she placed inside his beak. It was immediately swallowed with ease, and a second and third eagerly looked for. From that moment his appetite returned; he ate whatever was offered him, soon recovered his strength, and we began to doubt whether we should find enough to feed him. The boys were surprised one day to find the creature swallowing small pebbles; but I explained that the ostrich requires these to enable it to digest its food, as small birds need gravel.

Master Whirlwind, as Jack had named him, lived principally on vegetables, maize, and acorns, and became so tame, that we could do as we liked with him. In less than a month he had been trained by Jack to walk and run with the boy on his back so cleverly, that I began to consider to what extent we might make him useful as a riding-horse.

I could easily contrive a saddle; but how could a bit be

made to suit a bird's beak, or reins to guide an ostrich? I was almost inclined to give it up, when I remembered that the change from light to darkness, or the contrary, greatly influenced the creature.

I determined, therefore, to construct a leathern hood, somewhat like that worn by the eagle. It was to reach from the back of the head to the commencement of the beak in front, and to have holes cut in it for the eyes and ears. Having fitted this to the bird's head, I fastened a ring on each side, and my wife sewed on strings for tying it under his throat.

Over the eye-holes two square flaps were sewed, to be raised or let fall by a connection with the bridle, which was formed of a strap fastened at each end to the rings at the beak. I hoped by this arrangement to guide our feathered courser, for I had noticed that darkness would immediately bring the creature to a full stop, even while running swiftly. My plan was this: if the rider wished to go straight forward, both eye-holes would remain uncovered; to make the creature turn to the left, he must let down the little curtain over the right eye, or, if to the right, the left eye must be covered; and to stop him, the light must be shut out from both eyes.

The performance proved more difficult to carry out than I had expected; but by degrees the tormented animal submitted, and appeared to understand, in a very short time, the meaning of the covered or uncovered eyes, and to obey the movement of the bridle.

The saddle was placed near the neck of the ostrich, partly resting on the shoulders and partly on the back, being fastened by a girth under the wings and across

This hood must have resembled the hoods of horse-clothing which valuable horses wear when taken out by the grooms for exercise.

the breast. This position was necessary, as the slope of the back would have rendered it unsafe; and the shoulders are the strongest part of a bird's back.

We did not expect Master Whirlwind to act as a beast of burden, but as a fleet courser, and, with Jack as his rider, his journeys between Falcon's Nest and Rock House were performed with astonishing rapidity.

The wondrous qualities of this fleet steed created a little dissension among the boys, who were not pleased that Jack should be the sole proprietor. Jack, however, held fast to his new possession, and his brothers could not conceal their jealousy. I was therefore obliged to interfere.

"I must allow Jack to retain the ostrich," I said, "because he is not only lighter in weight than Fritz or Ernest, but more agile in his movements. Frank is not strong enough yet to manage so fleet a horse. At the same time, I give up the ostrich to Jack, only on condition that his brothers may use it occasionally, or when it is wanted for special service requiring swiftness."

Long before the education of the ostrich was completed, Fritz had introduced me to three young ostriches which had been hatched in the oven. They were curious little creatures, delicately formed, but with comical heads, and looked like young cygnets, with their yellow down and swan-like throats, as they trotted about on long stilt-like legs.

One of them lived only a few hours, and although we carefully watched the two remaining chicks, and fed them with lightly-boiled eggs and milk mixed with cassava-flour, they were all dead in three days.

The preparation and cleansing of the bears' skins formed our next employment. They had already been

salted, dried, and scraped. Having no tan, I mixed honey with water, and after boiling, and waiting till it became sufficiently cool, soaked the skins in it for several days, till they were softened, and fit to use as leather.

The honey-water appeared so clear after being skimmed, that it struck me I might save some of it as a drink, before using any for the skins. I therefore drew off enough to fill one of our bamboo-reed casks, and boiled it again with nutmeg, cinnamon, and spurge-leaves. The result was most successful, for we found it both agreeable and refreshing.

My work on the skins proved very successful. The leather was without a crease, free from the least unpleasant smell, and the long fur so soft and shining, that I felt delighted with the fruit of my labors.

I was desirous next to try hat-making, and determined that my first trial should be a hat for Frank, of the civet-rat or beaver's skin. After several attempts, I produced a kind of felt, which I colored a bright red with cochineal, and then dipped in a solution of india-rubber, to make it water-proof. I next prepared a wooden block of the size and shape required, stretched the softened felt upon it, and, after passing a hot iron over the fur to smooth it, left it to dry and become hard on the block.

In the morning I had the satisfaction of presenting to my wife and the boys a well-made, light, firm, and elegant little red Swiss hat. My wife admired it greatly, and at once prepared to line it with silk, and adorn it with a knot of ribbon and two large and two small

This drink is still made in many English counties. It often appeared at the tables of the rich and noble in the time of the Saxons, and is still named, as it was then, *mead* or *metheglin*.

ostrich-feathers. This clever production was placed on the head of little Frank, and everybody said it became him admirably.

As may be supposed, each of my boys begged me to make similar hats for them, and I promised to do so as soon as they could obtain for me the necessary material, either civet-rats or beavers. I advised them to make half a dozen rat-traps, of a size large enough to admit the water-rat, which has the most beautiful fur, and is the largest of the species. But I told them these traps must be made to kill the animal at once, not to torture or imprison it, with the prospect of a horrid death from dogs.

I decided, also, that every fifth animal they brought me should be mine, that I might obtain sufficient materials to make a bonnet for their mamma and a hat for myself.

The boys readily agreed to this arrangement, and went to work quickly with the traps; for the rainy season was close at hand, and might come upon us without a moment's warning.

Success in hat-making encouraged me to attempt the manufacture of porcelain. I determined to look over my materials, and make a trial. Our store of pipe-clay required cleansing, and the asbestos had to be beaten down into talc, and mixed with water into a soft moss, before we could begin.

In one of the chests I found a number of glass beads of various colors, intended, we supposed, for barter with the savage nations of the South Sea Islands. These I broke with a hammer, and crushed to a fine powder.

The materials being now ready, I found that moulds were required for the different vessels, and as these, being made of gypsum, also needed to be dried, our work did not proceed very rapidly.

I was able, at last, to press the porcelain material into the moulds, and place them in the oven. When they were partly baked, I sprinkled the powder of the glass beads over them, in the shape of stars, and, after many failures, succeeded in producing a set of white china cups and saucers, a cream-jug, sugar-basin, and six small plates, which were smooth and glossy, and enamelled with many-colored stars.

The shapes were far from perfect; but they gave great satisfaction, and when Fritz filled the plates with rosy and golden fruit, resting on green leaves, the table presented a very attractive appearance.

While busy with the china, the rainy season began; and as I could not leave home to obtain a fresh supply of materials for porcelain, I turned my attention to the condor and the vulture. The skins, which I carefully removed with the feathers, were soaked in warm water into which I had thrown a little euphorbia-gum to destroy the insects. I sewed them together, and stuffed them firmly with cotton-wool. Through the legs, and also in the neck and under the shoulder of each wing, I thrust pieces of cork to keep these parts firm. I was puzzled about the eyes, but at length determined to make four balls of porcelain of the necessary size, which I painted while half baked, and which restored the natural appearance of these birds.

The condor, whose outstretched wings were supported by cane and strong wire, was fixed at one side of our dwelling-room against the partition, and the vulture on the highest of the book-shelves, in a standing position, as ornaments to our home. In all these performances the boys took great interest, working diligently with me.

With these and other occupations the first few weeks of the rainy season were passing. But, notwithstanding the

lessons and daily readings, the time began to drag heavily. Fritz at last came to the rescue.

"Now," said he, "that we have in the ostrich a rapid traveller by land, might we not contrive something to cut through the sea with equal speed? What if we were to make a cajack, or Greenlander's canoe?"

The proposition was hailed with enthusiasm by us all, except the mother, who always felt anxious when we were on the water. I endeavored to re-assure her by explaining that a cajack was a wonderfully safe kind of canoe, covered with the skin of the dog-fish, and almost as buoyant as a life-boat; and she said no more.

With plenty of material, and time enough to finish the skeleton of the boat before the end of the rainy season, we set about the work with eager interest.

Long, thick pieces of whalebone formed the sides of the canoe, which were joined at each end for stem and stern, and fitted into a plank underneath for a keel. Split bamboo-canes built up the sides over the whalebone curves; and the keel, which was at least twelve feet long, was strengthened by a band of copper running the whole length, into which I fixed an iron ring for mooring the boat.

The deck which was also made of split bamboo-canes, extended over the whole of the canoe, except at an opening in the middle, in which the rower could sit and use oars or paddles.

All this occupied us so completely, that the rain passed away, and the sun shone bright and clear, before our canoe was ready to be removed out of the cave. The sides were quickly covered with the skin of the dog-fish, and in the fore-part a mast with a three-cornered sail was fixed. When at length the little skiff was launched on the

water, it bounded like a leather ball, and floated so lightly that it drew scarcely an inch of water.

Before Fritz, whom I considered the rightful owner, could be trusted out to sea alone in this fragile boat, his mother tried her ingenuity in making him a swimming-dress, constructing it like a double sack, with openings for the head, arms, and feet. The material was to be soaked in a solution of india-rubber, the double portions, or rather the outside and the lining, being closely sewed together around the edges, with only a sufficient opening between to inflate with air like a balloon. The material having been made air-tight, and the opening closed with cork, the dress would float, and so support the wearer.

At length, one fine morning, it was settled that Fritz should attire himself in his swimming-dress, which he had purposely inflated with air, to prove it. He was welcomed with shouts of laughter, for the bathing-dress stuck out before and behind in a most ridiculous manner.

Without seeming to notice the laughter, he marched forward with the greatest gravity, entered the water, and paddled like a duck across the creek to the shore of Shark's Island; then, with a shout of triumph, turned and swam back to us.

We all hastened on board the yacht, and rowed lustily to meet our brave young water-stepper, and congratulate him on his success; but his naughty brothers would only dance around him, call him Punch, and laugh without control.

This success caused us all great satisfaction, and the younger boys entreated their mother to make for each of them a swimming-dress of the same description.

While we were on Shark's Island we sought for the young antelopes, and, to make them tame and glad to see

us, attracted them to us by throwing handfuls of bruised maize, acorns, and salt, of which all animals are exceedingly fond.

We also made a discovery which gave us great pleasure. In a spot almost inaccessible we came upon a clear and plentiful spring of pure running water, which the antelopes must have found, for the traces of their footsteps were easily distinguished near it.

Finding the plants on Shark's Island in a flourishing condition we embarked in the yacht for Whale Island, to see if our hopes were to be equally realized there.

At a short distance inland from the shore we met with large quantities of marine plants, which were a welcome sight, for I hoped they would be acceptable to our new colony of rabbits. But on arriving at the island, although we saw nothing of them, their mischievous performances soon became too evident. The dainty animals had gnawed the bark of the young trees, as the hares do in winter, and entirely eaten up the palm-tree shoots which I had planted. The cocoanut-stems they had spared, probably on account of toughness and the resinous taste.

We left our little colony a plentiful supply of food, and before leaving the island, proceeded to the spot on which we had found the stranded whale.

The birds had removed all signs of the flesh; but the skeleton remained nearly perfect, and the sun and wind had bleached and purified the bones to a delicate whiteness.

Ten or twelve joints of the vertebræ, which I thought might be made useful, we strung upon a strong cord fastened to our yacht, and towed across the creek towards Rock Island.

I had long had in mind the making of a mill for crush-

ing grain, and it appeared to me that the joints of the vertebræ were sufficiently large and strong for that purpose. To make a stamping or crushing machine of stone or hard wood was beyond my power; but blocks of wood were necessary to raise the crushers, and to these the joints of the whale would require to be fastened. I harnessed Storm to the wheeled sledge, and took the road to the forest near the Jackal River, accompanied by Floss and Brownie. The boys, as I supposed, were rat-hunting.

I soon found a tree with a beautiful upright stem of about two feet in thickness, and quite suitable for my purpose. Marking it, to distinguish it from the rest, and loading my sledge with clay from the loam-pit close by, I turned my steps homeward, reaching the house long before the boys returned, though I also had missed the dinner-hour.

Late in the evening, and just as we were beginning to grow anxious, Jack arrived on his fleet steed, the others following in the distance, on Lightfoot and Grumbler; the latter laden with the booty in two sacks.

The contents of the sacks were quickly exhibited,—four wild birds, twenty musk-rats, a kangaroo, a monkey, two animals of the hare species, and half a dozen beaver-rats, which greatly resemble the musk-rat. The creatures like hares appeared to be of the kind spoken of by Buffon, as having black breasts and long tails, and called "tolays." Fritz had also a large bundle of thistles.

During supper Fritz gave us a description of their expedition. They had spent nearly the whole day in the neighborhood of Wood Grange, attracting the ondatras to the traps with red carrots, and the beaver-rats by little fish or earth-worms. They had distinguished the musk-rats by the smell, and caught the animals with noses like

beaks, in traps. Their dinner of fish was cooked on a fire-hearth of stones.

"And for what are all those thistles intended, Fritz?" I asked.

"I found them in my wanderings," he replied. "The thorns are formed like hooks, and I thought the plant might be useful for carding wool, or separating the hairs of the animal fur."

This discovery pleased me greatly: not only would it be useful for the purpose named by Fritz, but in many other ways.

He had also brought a small cinnamon-tree to be planted in the vegetable garden, and this was welcomed by his mother with great satisfaction.

We decided to defer all preparation of the booty till the following morning, and as usual, after our evening devotions, we retired to rest, tired with the day's exertions.

No doubt this was the plant called the "teazle," used in the manufacture of wool. The hooked scales or thorns of the leaves raise the nap on cloth. No machine can be made to produce the same effect so readily.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE CRUSHING-MACHINE. — A PLENTIFUL HARVEST.

THE removal of the skin from the animals killed in hunting was always a troublesome undertaking, especially to the boys, and I at length thought of a plan which, if I could carry it out, appeared likely to lighten the task.

I searched among our ship-stores, and in the surgeon's chest found a large syringe, which, with a few modifications, served my purpose admirably. I perforated the stopper, and made an opening in the piston, in which I fitted two cork pegs, and had in my possession a machine for compressing air, almost like an air-pump.

As the boys gathered to assist in the unpleasant work of skinning the animals, I gave them a military salute, and exhibited my instrument. They shouted with laughter, and exclaimed, "Papa has a syringe: what can it be for — a chemist's shop?"

I lifted the kangaroo from the ground, hung it by its hind legs to a tree, and cut an opening in the skin just below the breast; then, inserting the mouth of the syringe, I blew into it with all my strength, and drew the piston up and down to pump the air between the flesh and skin.

The skin puffed out in every part, altering the shape of the animal in a most amusing manner, and only adhering in a few spots of not the least importance.

These I separated with my knife, and removed the

whole from the animal, the performance having occupied less than half the usual time.

"O papa, what a capital invention!" exclaimed the boys.

"Papa must be a conjurer," cried Jack. "I can't understand how it is done."

"Very simply," I replied. "Between the skin and the flesh of all animals there are thousands of little bladders or cells, formed of a fatty substance. If these are filled with air they burst, and the skin separates from the flesh and is easily removed. This device is not new: the Greenlanders have been acquainted with it for years. When they have killed a seal or sea-horse, they blow between the skin and flesh, which causes the creature to float more lightly as they tow it to shore; and the skin can be removed with the greatest ease."

By the contrivance with the syringe, the work of skinning the animals was greatly lightened, and in two days we finished what would otherwise have occupied a week.

This done, I determined on the following day to visit the forest, and cut down, with the help of the boys, the tree I had marked as suitable for making blocks for the crushing-mill. We started early with a cart-load of ropes, saws, axes, and other useful tools.

On arriving at the tree, I desired Fritz and Jack to climb to the top and saw off the highest and largest branches, so that the tree in falling might not crush its neighbors. They then tied ropes to the upper part, that we might from a safe distance guide it in its fall.

Fritz and I then began cutting the stem with a perpendicular saw at the side opposite the cords. It was slow, hard work; but when we had cut it nearly through, we all placed ourselves at the ropes, and by pulling with

our united strength, heard the trunk crack, saw it totter, and at last fall slowly to the ground in an open space, without accident to ourselves, or injury to the other trees. The branches and shoots were then lopped off, and the trunk sawed into blocks four feet long. Smaller ones for other purposes were cut from the large branches, and the remainder, with the young shoots, was left to dry in the sun for firewood.

This work occupied us two days, and on the third I carried home four large and two small blocks, with which and the vertebræ of the whale I was able to complete my crushing-machine in a very short time. We tried it first with some grains of rice; but turning the small iron wheel, which made the blocks move up and down like a sledge-hammer, was heavy and tedious work, being so hard and firm. The bones of the whale, however, crushed the rice to powder in a few minutes, and rendered it useful for cooking in ways that were impossible while it remained whole.

One evening, we noticed that our domestic fowls returned home with full crops, and apparently satisfied after an unusual feast.

I had almost forgotten the field in which had been sowed wheat, barley, and maize before the rainy season. It struck me now that these turkeys and fowls had come from the direction of the wheat-field, and, upon going to examine the damage done, I was astonished to find the corn quite high, and the grain fully ripe, although little more than four months had elapsed since it had been sowed. I knew, therefore, that in the future we should be able to obtain two crops a year.

I prepared for harvesting by clearing a large space in front of the veranda for a threshing-floor. The ground

had become hardened by the heat of the sun; and by frequently pouring water on the surface, beating with sticks, and then leading the animals across it to tread it down, we made it as hard and smooth as a floor. This completed, we repaired early one morning to the field with our sickles, followed by Storm and Grumbler, carrying large baskets or panniers on their backs to receive the grain.

I wished to adopt the Italian method of reaping, as it occupied less time. I told the boys to take as many ears as they could hold in the left hand, cut them from the straw as far down as could be reached with the right, and throw them into the baskets carried by the animals, who followed the reapers closely, led by Jack or Ernest.

They soon caught the idea, and went rapidly to work; so that by evening the field was reaped, and we had gathered a large store of grain in the ear.

My wife seemed to consider that it was any thing but economy to leave behind all the short ears not reached by the sickle, and the straw, which would be so useful for the stables and stalls.

"It is made economical by the Italians, who are famous farmers," I replied; "for by cutting the grain in this way they also obtain food for their cattle. In a few weeks grass grows to a good height amongst the stubble, and they mow it all down together. The short ears remain among the blades of grass, and the whole is turned over in the sun, as we make hay, and forms during winter a very useful substitute for grass and corn in Italian stables. We must, however, adopt the ancient method of treading out the grain, and threshing it; for we have no other means of separating it from the husk."

Threshing was performed by spreading the bundles of

grain on the new threshing-floor, and letting the four boys, each mounted on his usual steed, ride the animals across it in every direction. The heavy stamping of the hoofs separated the grain from the husks, and the dust and chaff flew in clouds around us.

The boys allowed the animals now and then to pause and rest, and the temptation to take a mouthful of the grain that lay at their feet was too strong to be resisted. My wife smiled as she observed this, and said, "It will lessen our store; but they deserve a handful now and then for their exertions."

"Our threshing is nearly completed," I replied, "and they have not eaten much; besides, it is said in Scripture, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.'"

While we were gathering and sifting the grain, our feathered folk — cackling, gobbling, and quacking — came to the threshing-floor to have their share. The boys were about to drive them away, for they picked at the loose grain in the most hasty manner; but I prevented them, saying, "Let our pensioners have their share. What we lose in grain will be returned to us in the improved condition of our poultry."

And, after all, we had no cause to complain, for, when I had measured the produce of our harvest, I found that we had nearly a hundred bushels of grain to add to our store, including wheat, maize, and barley.

We had scarcely finished all this work when the shoal of herrings arrived; but this time we stored only two barrels, after they had been salted and smoked. I was more anxious for the arrival of the dog-fish, as I required skins to complete the canoe. I wished to make the deck water-tight, and to form a kind of reservoir for water

beneath it, in the stern of the boat, as well as a place to carry arms and provisions near the prow.

When this had been done, I prepared two harpoons, to be supported on the water by bladders filled with air, and fastened them to the boat with straps.

Fritz equipped himself for his first canoe-voyage in his swimming-dress, inflating it before springing on board, till he looked like a gigantic frog.

His brothers greeted his comical appearance with shouts of laughter, and even his mother joined them, although she felt anxious for the boy's safety. I prepared the yacht, that she might follow him with the boys and me; but the canoe was tossing on the waves long before we could embark. To show us his power over the canoe, Fritz began to perform all sorts of tricks; first paddling on ahead for a considerable distance, then causing the canoe to rock fearfully, and at last, to show that it was too buoyant to sink under water, completely capsizing it.

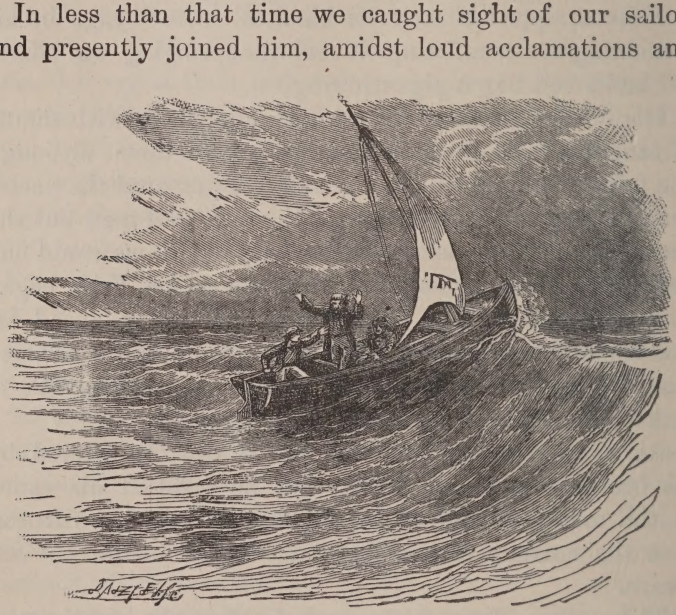
As it righted itself, the shouts of delight uttered by his brothers so elated Fritz, that he paddled his canoe to the mouth of the Jackal River, with such swiftness, that the current carried him out to sea before he was aware.

This rather alarmed me, and, leaving the mother and little Frank on shore, I stepped into the boat with Jack and Ernest, and started in pursuit of the thoughtless voyager. We made our way towards the reef of rocks on which the ship had been wrecked, as I felt sure that was the direction Fritz had taken.

For a long time the yacht sailed steadily on; but no signs of the canoe could be discovered, even through a telescope. At last I saw in the distance a thin wreath of smoke curling in the air, followed, in a few moments, by the feeble report of a pistol.

It was a great relief to me to hear this sound, which I knew must be a signal from Fritz, and, after firing an answering one, I steered towards the spot from which the sound came, knowing that we could reach it in ten minutes.

In less than that time we caught sight of our sailor, and presently joined him, amidst loud acclamations and



IN PURSUIT OF FRITZ.

shouts of welcome. But our astonishment was great at observing on a fragment of rock a large yet not full-grown walrus, which our young hero of the sea had killed with a harpoon.

He excused himself for the anxiety he had given us by saying that he had been unable to withstand the current. "And then," continued the boy, "I came upon this walrus, which I could not bear to lose. I wounded him

with one of the harpoons, and he rushed into that crevice in the rock, dragging the canoe as he went; so that I was obliged to make an end of him with the other harpoon. If he is too heavy to be carried home, I should like at least to keep the head with those two white teeth: I would fasten it on the fore-part of my canoe, which could then be named the 'Walrus.'"

"I, too, should be very unwilling to leave those beautiful teeth behind," I replied. "But what we do must be done quickly; for the air feels heavy, and foretells stormy weather."

"Don't have the head cut in pieces, papa!" cried Jack. "It would look so nice on the canoe!"

"Ah!" said Ernest; "and in a little while it would decay, and produce a not very pleasant odor for the Greenlander in his canoe."

"No," said Fritz; "it must be taken home first, and cleaned and dried, till it becomes as hard as wood, like one I have seen at the museum at home."

"Papa," asked Ernest, "are not these animals natives of northern regions?"

"As a rule, they are," I replied; "but this walrus may possibly belong to the South Polar Seas, which are equally cold; and there is a smaller species called 'dugong,' at the Cape."

While thus talking, we had dragged the head of the animal from the rock to our boat; and, with some difficulty, when Fritz had removed the harpoons, I cut off the head. Fritz remarked that it would be useful to have a hatchet and lance and also a mariner's compass, to enable the rower to direct his course in case he should be driven out to sea in a storm, and I promised that these articles should be placed on board on the following day.

Bringing the head of the walrus safely on board the yacht, I wished Fritz to join us, and take the canoe in tow; but he begged me to allow him to go back alone, and without delay stood out to sea, while we followed, but more slowly.

The dark clouds, which had for some time been gathering with threatening aspect, burst upon us suddenly in a frightful storm of wind and rain. Fritz was already so far in advance of us, that we could not see a trace of the boat, especially through the blinding rain; and to make him hear amid the roar of the storm would have been impossible. We put on the cork swimming-belts, and lashed ourselves to the boat by leather straps, to prevent being washed overboard by the waves.

Finding at last that I had no power over the boat, I commended myself and my children to God, in alternate hope and fear. I concealed my alarm, however, and tried to encourage hope and trust in my two boys, who, I had no doubt, felt safer in the midst of all than I did, because they had me for a protector.

Meanwhile, the storm raged in all its fury. The waves rose to mountain height, and seemed to mingle with the dark clouds which descended to meet them. Lightning flashed across the darkness, throwing its lurid glare on the crests of the foaming waves. Gusts of wind threatened to capsize us, while the foaming waves dashed over the deck of our little skiff, and the rain fell in torrents.

At one moment we were riding at the top of an enormous wave, and the next descending into the trough of the sea, as into a deep gulf. But our boat held on her way, the skins filled with air on each side preventing her from sinking; and I could from time to time turn her course in the right direction by a move of the rudder.

In all this danger, and with strong hopes of safety if our boat could hold out till the storm ceased, my greatest anxiety arose from my ignorance of the fate of Fritz. Indeed, I gave him up for lost, and could only offer a silent prayer to God that he would enable me to submit to his holy will, if my son were taken from me.

The storms cease in these climates almost as suddenly as they begin; and although the waves still rolled and dashed furiously over us, yet, when the rain was over and the air cleared, to my great joy I found that we had been driven by the wind towards the entrance to Deliverance Bay, and were approaching the well-known creek between the rocks and Whale Island.

My heart rose in gratitude to God for his protecting care of myself and the boys; and when, at last, we entered the bay, another cause of thankfulness arose. We saw in the distance the mother, with little Frank and Fritz, kneeling on the strand, no doubt offering thanks to God for saving Fritz, and praying that we might be delivered from danger.

Great and overwhelming was our joy as we met, and, while clasped in each other's arms, realized from what we were saved. After we had knelt, and offered our thanks for this happy deliverance, we hastened to Rock Castle for dry clothes, and to think and talk of the dangers through which we had passed, over some warm, well-spiced soup. The yacht was then drawn on shore, and with the cargo, consisting of the head of the walrus, was dragged on rollers to Rock House by one of the animals.

Fritz and Ernest also brought the canoe, and both were placed side by side in one of those recesses in our cave which we were constantly discovering and making useful by cutting entrances, to enable us to place in them all the

stores which required shelter. The accommodations at Rock Castle were large enough to admit even the pinnace, had we not built a dock for it near Flamingo Marsh.

The head of the walrus was carried to the workshop, and after being washed, cleaned, and dried, was placed on Fritz's canoe, where it presented a most imposing appearance.

The heavy rain which had fallen at such an unusual season had swollen the two streams which descended from the rocks, so that, in several places, and especially near Falcon's Nest, the water had overflowed its banks, causing damage which required our constant exertion to repair. The Jackal River, which was very deep, rose so high above its banks, that our bridge was in danger, and the fountain at Falcon's Nest was almost destroyed.

During this period our days had, for some time, passed very peacefully, till one moonlight night I was awakened by the fierce barking of the watch-dogs, mingled with a confused sound of growling, squeaking, and trampling feet.

I immediately pictured to myself an assembly of jackals, buffaloes, bears, and boars, amusing themselves, or fighting with our dogs.

Springing out of bed, I hastily threw on a few garments, seized the nearest gun, rushed to the entrance-door, the upper half of which was always open at night to admit the cool air, and looked out in every direction.

"Is that you, papa?" said Fritz from the window of his sleeping-room. "What on earth is the matter?"

"Nothing very alarming," I replied. "I believe those dreadful pigs are up to some mischief again, and that the dogs are after them. Let us go out and prevent death and slaughter, if we can."

Fritz scrambled through the window, half dressed, and

we hastened together towards the scene of the tumult. It was as I expected. The pigs had managed to cross the bridge, and two of the dogs had seized the young boar by the ears; while the others were hunting the old sow and the little ones. I was sorry to be obliged to beat our two watchful champions; but they would not set the boar free without it, and, to my surprise, when pursued, the whole herd fled towards the bridge.

My boys had not, as I at first supposed, neglected to remove the planks, as had been done every night since the appearance of the boar on the potato-field; but the pigs had crossed it by their own cunning. The beams still remained, and the creatures must have followed each other in single file with the utmost caution, for these beams had spaces between them quite wide enough for a young pig to slip through.

I determined to rise early with Fritz, and begin the construction of a drawbridge, which could be lifted every evening, to secure us from being aroused for the future by such uninvited guests.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE DRAWBRIDGE. — THE HYENA.

AT breakfast, next morning, we related our night's adventure to the boys and their mother; to the latter the proposal to erect a drawbridge was most acceptable, and the younger boys were equally pleased at the prospect of helping in a new and useful undertaking.

We began by fixing in the ground, on the Rock House

side of the river, two strong posts, the width of the bridge apart; across these, close to the ground, I nailed two planks, one above the other, to strengthen them, and a third at the top for the same purpose. We then nailed the planks of the bridge close together across the beams, forming a much safer footpath than the loose ones had been, and at the opposite end nailed a stronger board, to hold the rings, and bear the strain when the bridge was raised. We also lengthened it, that a sufficient portion for safety should rest on the shore.

At the end nearest our home, four strong iron hinges were placed, which connected it with the planks across the two posts; and by these we hoped to raise it easily every evening. For this purpose, strong cables were passed through holes in the highest part of the posts, and fastened in the rings at the opposite side. Strong iron staples were also fixed in the ground, behind the posts, to which the cable could be fastened when the bridge was drawn up, to keep it firmly in its place, iron hooks being fastened to the cable for this purpose.

Our drawbridge occupied nearly a fortnight in building; and, although the workmanship was rough and clumsy, we were delighted with the performance.

Added to this was a feeling of safety at night from the attacks of wild animals, which appeared to be more numerous in the distant parts of the island, from which we were now separated by the chain of rocks and the Jackal River, and protected by the cannon on the shores of Deliverance Bay.

The boys were delighted to climb the tall posts of the new bridge, and look over the country on the opposite side. In the distance they could distinguish the gazelles and antelopes which they had driven from the Green

Valley to Wood Grange. These little creatures would sometimes approach the outskirts of the wood, but, on seeing that they were watched, would start back with a rush, fly like the wind, and vanish from our eyes.

"What a pity it is that these elegant creatures cannot be tamed," said Fritz one day, "so as to associate with us, like our domestic animals!"

"If we had a buffalo-lick," said Ernest, "as they have in Georgia, the antelopes would soon be here."

"What is a buffalo-lick?" asked Fritz.

"It is a spot formed by Nature, Fritz," I said. "We could not, therefore, have such a one here, although there are similar places in our native land called 'salt-licks,' because the chamois-hunter mixes saltpetre with the soil to attract his prey to a certain spot. But in America the soil is formed by nature, and covers several acres, which consist of more than half salt. All animals, whether wild or tame, are fond of salt."

"Could we not lay out such a place, Papa?"

"I have no objection," I replied, "if you can obtain a store of soil sufficiently moist: we have salt enough in our salt-cave to mix with it."

"Oh!" they all exclaimed, "that will be delightful. We shall be able to attract and tame so many animals! What must we do first?"

"Well, I suppose I must agree to accompany you on another excursion, for we shall require a large store of porcelain earth, and several bamboo-canes for another purpose: so, the earlier we are ready to start to-morrow, the better."

Away ran the boys, full of glee, — Ernest to find a suitable spot for the salt-lick, Jack with a secret design about the pigeons, while Frank volunteered to get the

old sledge ready, and at once drew it from its place in the cave. Fritz applied to his mother for provision, saying that pemmican would be acceptable if they might have it.

"Pemmican!" she exclaimed, "what is that?"

"The Canadian fur-dealers take it with them on their long journeys, and it is considered very wholesome."

"But how is it made, my son?" she replied, "or where can you procure the materials?"

"O mamma!" he said, laughing, "you have the materials; but I do not like to give you so much trouble. I can make it myself if you will give me slices of meat. Pemmican can be made of bear's flesh, mixed with any other meat, and flour and eggs; and, after being chopped very small, it is fried."

The mother readily offered to help; and before evening a store of pemmican sufficient for two days was in readiness, and placed in a bag with other provisions.

At last the longed-for morning dawned, breakfast was despatched, and on the wheeled sledge were placed Fritz's canoe, the travelling-tent, provisions both for food and warfare, and a number of other things.

While the boys were loading the cart, I remarked that Jack was carefully, yet secretly, placing two pairs of our European pigeons in one of the baskets. They were large, dark, handsome birds, with a red circle around the eyes, and of the kind which, if I do not mistake, Buffon has named the "sultan pigeon."

"The youngster has provided a substitute for his dinner," I thought to myself, "in case our store of pemmican should not be to his taste. The old pigeons, however, will not be a very delicate tidbit, with their tough flesh."

The mother, who needed rest, wished for this time to

remain behind; and Ernest, who had been for a long time whispering and tittering mysteriously with Fritz and Jack, on hearing his mother's remark, also expressed his wish to remain at home with her. To settle the dispute which arose, I at once decided to remain at home, and, with the help of Ernest, prepare a sugar-press, which I had long promised to my wife.

It was settled, therefore, that the eldest and the two younger boys should go; and they at once set off in high spirits, — Fritz and Frank on Storm and Grumbler, who drew the sledge, and Jack on the ostrich, with the dogs, Fawn and Brownie, barking at his heels.

The evening of the first day had arrived, and I was seated in the veranda with Ernest and my wife, who was engaged in sewing, enjoying the rest and the cool evening air. Our conversation turned upon our young excursionists, and we wondered what adventures they would have to relate. I could see that the mother felt anxious, and when at length we retired to rest she expressed her wish that the three boys were safe at home.

"O mamma, they are all right!" said Ernest, and I noticed a twinkle in his eyes, as he spoke, that made me feel convinced of some secret arrangement with his brothers, known only to himself.

At an unusually early hour next morning I heard Ernest moving about, but he did not make his appearance till breakfast-time, when, entering with a grave step, hat in hand, and bowing low, yet with a pretended air of dignity, he presented me with a letter, and said, —

"The postmaster of the Rock district presents his humble respects to the nobly-born ladies and gentlemen of this house, and hopes he shall be pardoned for not being able to forward the despatches from Sydney Cove and

Jackson's Bay until this morning, the post having arrived too late last night."

As I took the paper, he bowed again, and stood waiting for me to read it.

I was rather bewildered for the moment by this strange address, and by the paper placed in my hands. I observed also that my wife looked pale: so I asked, —

"What does this mean, my boy?"

"Papa," exclaimed Ernest, "it's all right, only fun. Read it, and then you will understand the joke. And mamma, please, I'll have my breakfast meanwhile."

I began to have some idea now of the secret which the boys had so cleverly carried out; but I concealed my suspicions, and, opening the packet, read aloud as follows: —

"The Governor-General of New South Wales to His Excellency the Governor of Rock Castle, Falcon's Nest, Wood Grange, Sugar-cane Grove, and Prospect Hill: greeting.

"Most noble, well-beloved, and trusted Ally, — We have heard with some displeasure a report that on this day three disreputable young men have set out from your colony with the intention of proceeding here, and living by poaching, hunting, and other dishonorable practices, which are sure to be injurious to the game in this province, and cause great damage.

"Information has also been received, from which it appears that you have the terribly destructive and fearful hyena in the woods of your colony, and that one of these wild animals has broken into a sheepfold at a place called Wood Grange.

"In consequence of these reports, we pray your Excellency to give up these dreadful young men to justice, and use every means to destroy the wild animals which still exist in your colony.

"Accept, most noble Ally, my best wishes.

"Given at Sydney Cove, in Jackson's Bay, the twelfth day of the current month, and the thirty-fourth year of the colony.

"(Signed), "The Governor, Philip Philipson."

As I ceased reading, Ernest burst into a loud fit of laughter, and, rushing from the table, began dancing about so wildly that a little letter fell from his pocket. I was about to pick it up, but he was too quick for me; and, holding it firmly, he exclaimed, "This is a private letter to me, papa, from Wood Grange, but is perhaps more likely to be true than the despatch from good Sir Philip, who appears to be too ready to believe all that he hears."

"You are really puzzling me, Ernest," I said gravely. "Did Fritz leave this letter with you, to be given to me after he left, or has he indeed discovered the traces of the hyena?"

"No and yes, papa," said Ernest. "A carrier-pigeon brought me the letter you have read, last evening; but he arrived at the pigeon-house too late for me to get at it. Another pigeon brought this letter, tied under his wing, early this morning. I will read it to you word for word.

WOOD GRANGE, the 15th of the present month.

DEAREST PARENTS AND BROTHER, — A frightful hyena has killed two lambs and a ram at Wood Grange. Our dogs caught it, and little Frank shot at it so cleverly, that it fell dead immediately. It has taken us the whole day to remove the skin. The pemmican stuff is good for nothing.

Love to all. From your son and brother, FRITZ."

"Ha, ha!" laughed I; "that is a regular hunter's letter. God be praised that the affair with the hyena ended so favorably as appears. He must have newly arrived by the River at Wood Grange. Had he been long there, he would have made worse havoc with our sheep and goats."

"I hope the boys will be careful," said the mother. "I only wish we could call them home, or fetch them quickly."

"It will be better to wait, dear mamma," said Ernest. "No doubt there will be another letter by this evening's post," he added, with a smile.

That evening, at an earlier hour, we saw a carrier-pigeon arrive at the pigeon-house, and, climbing up, Ernest found, tied loosely under its wing, the following letter. It was certainly quite laconic.

A peaceful night. This morning very hot — cruise on the Wood Grange lake. Captured a black swan, a royal heron, cranes. Unknown animal escaped. Prospect Hill to-morrow. Best love to all.

FRITZ.
JACK.
FRANK.

This concise letter relieved the mother's mind not a little, as it led us to conclude that no second hyena could be in the neighborhood. The first despatch, however, still remained unexplained; and we felt it was necessary to wait, and hear from the boys a full account of their movements on their return home.

On the fourth day of their absence, shortly after dinner, another carrier-pigeon arrived with the following letter: —

"The defile by the river is forced. As far as Sugar-cane Grove all is laid waste. The smoking hut has disappeared. The sugar-canes are torn up and broken. Numbers of enormous footsteps of huge beasts appear everywhere on the ground. Hasten, dear father, to our help. We can neither go forward nor retreat; and, although we are safe now, we know not what danger is at hand."

I did not lose a moment. Saddling the onager, and requesting my wife to follow me with Ernest next morning, I sprang upon my fleet courser, and galloped off at a quick pace.

I accomplished in three hours a journey that usually took six, and my appearance was received by the boys

with shouts of joy. Without delay I proceeded at once to see with my own eyes the terrible destruction, and knew immediately that the large footprints in the earth were those of elephants.

The thick posts which I had erected to close the narrow pass by the river lay broken on the earth like reeds; and a grove of trees, which we had planted to form in time a

HYENA.

pleasant summer-house, was destroyed both in roots and branches. In the bamboo-thicket the young and tender plants were all eaten or torn up; indeed, it appeared as if the elephant troop had been accompanied by other animals, for I found smaller and fuller footprints in the soil, which seemed to belong to the hippopotamus.

We gathered wood to keep fires burning all night around the tent, as a protection; Fritz and I, with our guns in readiness, keeping watch also during the whole period of darkness.

About noon on the following day, Ernest and his mother arrived, with the cow harnessed to the cart, well loaded with provision for a long stay; for it was evident we should have to erect a dwelling in the neighborhood as soon as we had repaired the barricade at the entrance of the defile.

This done, I readily agreed to the earnest wish of Fritz, that we should build a summer-house after the plan adopted by the natives of Kamtchatka.

In place of four posts I substituted the stems of four beautiful trees, standing, in the form of a quadrangle, at a distance from each other of about twelve feet.

At the height of twenty feet from the ground, these four trunks were united by four strong split bamboo-canes, on which we laid boards for a flooring. From this we raised thinner bamboo-canes for walls, and to divide the space into apartments. The inner branches of the trees were partly cut away, and partly intwined about the canes, to close the openings between them; the outer branches I allowed to remain as additional security.

To form a roof, we trained the upper branches, and fastened them to the tops of the thin bamboo-canes, and over these laid bark to keep out the rain. The staircase was merely a plank with places cut out for steps, and a hanging rope to assist in climbing it, like a ladder on a ship's side.

The space below the rooms was divided into stalls for the cattle and a fowl-house. In front we lengthened the flooring, to form a balcony similar to that at Falcon's Nest, and upon this the entrance-door to the rooms opened. This balcony we could use as an observatory, for it commanded an immense prospect. The walls of the stables and fowl-house were constructed of cocoanut-palm wood,

cut in strips, and nailed obliquely across from one tree-stem to the other, leaving space for an entrance, and forming a lattice-work, which had a very pleasing effect.

This work scarcely gave us breathing-time during the day for a whole month; but the boys made several excursions to Falcon's Nest and Rock House to look after our domestic fowls and pigeons, and to bring back a report of the plantations and vegetable gardens. We found time also to listen to the story of their adventures during their four days' absence on that memorable excursion. These must be related in another chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FRITZ RELATES THE ADVENTURES OF THEIR EXCURSION.

THE evening chosen for this narrative was calm and peaceful, and we had progressed so rapidly with our summer-house, that we were able to seat ourselves on the new floor and listen at our ease.

"I watched you cross the bridge in safety," I said, "and yet I felt uneasy at the prospect of your absence."

"Yes, papa," said Fritz, "perhaps you did, but not after you received the despatches by our postman."

"That certainly relieved both your mother and myself from anxiety, for the day at least on which we received them; and, indeed, I am thankful you had such a means of communication, especially when you wished to send for me. But how came you to discover these carrier-pigeons?"

"Ernest found them out," said Fritz. "They are

described in his Natural History as large, dark birds, with purple throats, and a red circle around the eyes."

"Ah, yes!" I replied, laughing. "I saw you take those four pigeons, and was amused at the idea, for I knew they would be tough eating; yet, by the whispering and mysterious consultations going on, I supposed there was some surprise in store for us."

"And so there was, papa," said Fritz. "But now let me tell you of our first adventure with the hyena.

"Nothing occurred till we approached the farm, and then we heard loud bursts of what sounded like human laughter among the bushes. The dogs, who were in advance, ran back to us snarling and growling, while the ostrich at once bolted with his rider, and ran wildly into the marshy rice-field.

"'There is something wrong, Frank,' I said: 'you must be ready to fire, for it is as much as I can do to hold in these animals. Keep close to me, and let us discover what this unusual disturbance means.'

"Frank raised his gun, with his finger on the trigger, and while I held the buffalo and the ox firmly, the brave fellow approached the bushes, and peeped in. There stood a hyena, at about forty paces' distance, with his paw on a ram he had just killed, and laughing hideously. At this moment the dogs rushed past Frank, and, barking and yelling, flew towards the horrid beast; but before they could reach him, Frank had fired, and the ball passing through his fore-leg, and entering his chest, the monster fell to the earth.

"I heard the shot," continued Fritz, "and, fastening the frightened oxen to a tree, ran to help Frank; but fortunately I was not wanted. The two dogs had rushed upon the animal, and dragged away his prey; and wasn't Jack aston-

ished when, returning with the ostrich, he saw our horrid enemy lying dead? The creature was as large as a wild boar, and on his back, from the head to the tail, he had thick, black bristles standing on end. The dogs would never have been able alone to kill such a fierce, strong creature: so it is well for us that Frankie was so brave."

"It makes me nervous to think of it," said his mother. "But I am glad Frank was not afraid: that would have made it much more dangerous."

"I was a little afraid, mamma," said the boy, "when the creature laughed so horridly; but I thought I could hit him more easily while he was eating, and so I did, and I felt proud of having killed such splendid booty."

"And how did you manage the ostrich, Jack?" asked his mother.

"Oh! I covered his eyes, and he got over his fright when the laughing stopped."

"The skinning was a difficult process, papa," exclaimed Fritz. "We wanted you and the syringe to help us; but the hyena's skin is coarse and rough compared to the bear's.

"This was our first day's work, and, when we reached Wood Grange, I sent those letters by the carrier-pigeon, as you know. We had our supper in the tent, lighted fires round it, and laid down to sleep on the bears' skins, keeping watch in turns, with our guns in readiness.

"We had made up our minds to occupy the next day in exploring Black Swan Lake, and I was to cruise near the shore in my canoe, while Jack and Frank followed on foot, as near the water as they could walk without sticking in marshy ground; and at every point where I expressed a wish to stop on our way back they set up a tall bamboo-cane.

"I wanted to take some black swans alive, and almost immediately on starting in the canoe, I came upon two old birds with their young ones. I had some trouble to catch even one, for the old birds beat me with their wings, and tried to upset the canoe. But I have them all safe,

HERON.

as you know, papa, in the river, fastened with strings to the shore. Won't they look handsome in the duck-pond at Deliverance Bay, or in the Jackal River, when we have tamed them?

"A few minutes after securing the young swans, we saw

a beautiful bird standing on the shore, with long legs, a purple breast, and a crest of crimson-tipped feathers on its head. I threw a lasso of fine string around its neck, and, although it struggled, made it my prisoner. I think it is the royal heron.

"But I had a fright after this, though not so bad a one as the boys, who were walking. A great ugly beast, hissing loudly, rushed out of the rushes, just in front of them. We were so taken by surprise, that we never thought of firing till it was out of sight. It was of a dark brown color, and something like a young rhinoceros, but without tusks, and it had such a long snout and upper lip! — a most ugly animal. What could it have been?"

"By your description, Fritz," I replied, "the creature was a species of tapir. These animals frequent the banks of large rivers in South America; but they are entirely harmless."

"A flock of cranes came next," continued Fritz, "just as we passed the corn-field, and at these we fired with arrows. Four or five fell, as you have seen, papa; but two of them are unlike the others, and have larger wings."

"I noticed it, my boy," I replied. "These are Numidian cranes, and among them is one of those called the 'demoiselle crane,' from the affected and fantastical movements it performs on its legs, almost as if it was dancing."

"That evening, although we returned home very tired," said Fritz, going on with the narrative of their adventures, "we enjoyed very much our supper of cold peccary ham, cassava-cakes, and potatoes baked in the ashes. Sometimes for dessert after dinner we gathered guavas and other fruit. But, mamma," added the boy, "you were

right about the pemmican: it was not at all nice, and we gave it to the dogs."

"I dare say the instructions you gave me were not quite correct," she replied with a smile. "We will try again some day, and perhaps the second attempt will be more successful. But go on with your adventures, Fritz. They are very interesting."

"We intended to pay a visit next day to Prospect Hill," he said, "but, on reaching the pine-wood, we found a whole troop of monkeys seated on the branches. They howled and chattered, and gnashed their teeth at us, pouring upon us at the same time a hail-storm of pine-cones, which we had to run from side to side to avoid. At last I fired a few small shots, which sent them flying, and we continued our journey in peace.

"But such a scene of destruction presented itself when we reached Prospect Hill! We have been too busy since you came, with the repairing here, to spare time from our work to show it to you; but, O papa, you will be sorry when you see it!

"Every place is broken down and destroyed by those dreadful monkeys. We could only unharness the animals from the cart and the sledge: it was impossible to unload. The hut had disappeared, and we were obliged to put up our tent for a sleeping-place. I determined to try to exterminate these mischievous animals.

"We had milked the goats before leaving Wood Grange, and I placed a small quantity of milk in cocoanut-shells, with palm-wine and bruised grain. Into each I poured a few drops of the poisonous gum of the euphorbia-tree, which you had given me in a calabash-bottle. These cocoanut-shells I hung on the young palm-trees close by, and placed a few on the fallen trunks of other trees.

"All this employed us till late in the evening. Our animals were lying on the green turf, enjoying their rest, when we returned to the tent; but, before entering it, the appearance of a strange light in the distant horizon induced us to climb to the high ground on Prospect Hill, for I thought it must be a ship on fire. But while we stood looking earnestly at the light, the round disk of the moon, large and full, peeped above the horizon, and presently such a glorious light streamed over the sea and the country all around! It was beautiful! I could have read a book in the moonlight.

"While we thus stood on the hill, there suddenly sounded in our ears the loud snarling or hissing cry of some strange animal, and the crackling of grass and reeds under heavy feet, that seemed to be passing over the rocks into the sea.

"Fawn and Brownie, as well as the jackal, must have heard it, for they all set up barking and howling in a frightful manner; but the dogs could not rush out, for we had tied them up in the tent, for fear they should touch the poisoned drink intended for the apes. We returned quickly to the tent, and, after renovating the fires, laid down on our bear-skins to sleep; but we had very little rest. The moonlight roused the monkeys: we could hear them snarling, chattering, and howling near us for hours, and then all became so still that we fell asleep, and did not wake next morning till long after sunrise.

"O papa!" continued Fritz, "what a dreadful poison that euphorbia must be! When we left our tent, the sight of so many dead monkeys horrified us. I believe our possessions are safe now. As quickly as possible we threw the dead bodies into the sea, and burned the cocoa-nut-shells and flasks that had contained the poison."

"It was a dangerous performance, Fritz," I said, "and a sad necessity to destroy all those living creatures; but do not let us talk about it. You have not yet described the capture of those beautiful birds with the long tail-feathers."

"Ernest says they are birds of Paradise," he replied, "and indeed they have the most beautifully colored feathers I ever saw. We were walking through high grass near the river, when the dogs started quite a flock of them. I sent up my eagle, and he brought down one, which fell trembling and terrified in the grass; and as I saw another falling, I am sure from fear, I held out my hands and caught it, while Jack picked up the other; both were living and unhurt."

"I am glad they are not injured, Fritz," I replied, "and I think they will be easily tamed, for they are as gentle as doves."

While we remained at this spot and during the building of our new summer residence, I allowed the boys to make short excursions in the neighborhood alone. Fritz, on one occasion, brought home from the opposite shores of the stream two sorts of fruit, differing in size, but not in appearance. One of them he supposed to be young cucumbers, or gherkins; but, on tasting, I discovered that those he had mistaken for gherkins were bananas, and that the other was the valuable cacao-nut, from the seeds of which chocolate is made.

On the day before that on which our return to Rock House was fixed, Fritz started in his canoe to obtain for his mother a supply of young banana-plants and the cacao-fruit, which were to be found only on the opposite shore of the Eastern River. Behind him, as a sort of raft, he towed a bundle of reeds, which floated on the

surface of the water. This he brought back in the evening fully loaded.

His brothers rushed to the strand, and chased the canoe to secure the vegetable raft and its contents. Ernest and Frank seized it as he neared the shore, and at the same time one of them threw a loaded bag, that had slipped half into the water, to Jack, and told him to take care of it.

Away ran Jack with the bag, full of curiosity, and opened it just wide enough to peep in.

"Oh, you great fellow!" he cried, with a start; "what a monster you are!"

Then he closed the bag carefully, and, placing it again half in and half out of the water, made it fast to a tree. The reason of all these performances we did not learn till later.

By this time Fritz had sprung on shore, bringing a bird with its legs and wings bound, and full of joy, for his booty was a beautiful sultan or water-fowl. The legs and feet were red; the chief color of the body and wings a rich purple, changing on the back to dark green, flecked with red spots, and on the throat to brown. The creature was gentle, and appeared likely to be easily tamed. The beauty of this new arrival pleased the mother greatly, and she determined to take it under her own immediate care.

Fritz had met with many strange adventures in his cruise up the river; and his description of the beautiful country through which he passed would have tempted us to visit it, but for the creatures by which it was inhabited.

Green fields, trees loaded with fruit, were on one shore, and, on the other, overhanging mountains and majestic forests. Here and there troops of birds with glorious plum-

age, producing such an unheard-of mixture of sounds, that their cackling, quacking, gobbling, and screaming made him almost giddy. There were guinea-fowls, peacocks, and numbers of other birds, with a few sultan fowls, one of which he had managed to capture.

Farther on he passed a whole forest of mimosa-trees, in which from ten to twenty elephants were peacefully feeding on the large branches of the trees, which they tore down with their trunks with as much ease as Fritz could have broken off a sugar-cane. They then entered the river, and stood in the water as a means of cooling themselves during the fierce heat of the day.

At a point farther down the river, Fritz observed a number of panthers, their splendidly-marked fur shining in the sun's rays.

"I felt for a moment inclined to try my skill as a marksman on one of these fellows," he said; "but, while I hesitated, a rushing sound startled me, and I saw the water, at about a stone's throw in front of me, boiling and foaming, as if some large spring had suddenly burst forth beneath it.

"Suddenly there arose from the water a hideous animal, that made me shudder, its loud bellow resembling in some measure the neighing of a horse; while the creature, opening his wide jaws, displayed a row of frightful teeth, which seemed to be stuck in the gums like a regiment of Spanish lancers.

"I turned at once, and fled like an arrow, rowing with all my strength till I reached the current, while the perspiration rolled down my face. I never looked back till, at a bend of the river, I lost sight of the monster. I then took up my paddle again, and did not feel safe till I had reached a point which I knew was not far from our tent."

From this description I at once decided that the neighborhood of the Eastern River and the Green Valley was, in spite of its verdure and beauty, infested with wild animals, and among them the creature which had so alarmed Fritz. It was, no doubt, the hippopotamus or river-horse. He had, however, made many useful discoveries, and had not only obtained the required plants and seeds for his mother, but also a handsome water-fowl.

During the absence of Fritz we had all been busy in preparing for our departure on the following day.

The boy had evidently not lost his courage by the alarming sights he had seen on this excursion, for he begged me to allow him to return to Rock House in his canoe.

He could double Cape Disappointment, he said, and then keep inshore till he reached the Jackal River.

I readily gave my consent, for I felt it would be of great importance for one of the boys, at least, to learn the navigation of the island, and also to ascertain if it were possible to reach the promontory, or the Arabian Watch-tower, by a nearer way than by the open sea.

Early on the following morning we started for home with the cart and the sledge well-laden, and the numerous feathered-folk carefully packed in baskets.

I had decided to place the mountain fowl and the cranes, with a few other birds, on the two islands; the black swans, the sultan fowl, and the royal heron were to be set free on the marsh.

This marsh, near the duck-pond, had grown into a lake since the heavy rains, and we hoped to tame the newcomers by feeding them now and then with tidbits from our own hands.

The old bustards were to retain the privilege of being

near us at meal-times, as they were accustomed, standing gravely waiting for their share.

On the evening of our arrival at Rock House, and while seated in the veranda, enjoying the cool fresh air, Fritz returned, and hastened at once to relate his adventures. On reaching Cape Disappointment, he had skirted the opposite shore of the island, which we had never yet reached by land, and found it, in some parts a chain of high rocks, and in others fertile country.

On many of the clefts of the rocks, and at their feet, were groves of bushes covered with blossoms that filled the air with their sweet perfume. These flowers were small and white, with pink centres, and petals tipped with green. The heart-shaped leaves, however, as well as the stalks, were thorny. He also found another white flower with slender leaves, not unlike those of the cherry-tree blossom.

The hope that the latter flower was that of the Chinese tea-plant, which it resembled, greatly pleased the mother. The former I took for the blossom of the caper, which is a creeping plant growing in the crevices of rocks and on old ruins.

While Fritz was producing the results of his cruise, a sudden noise was heard in the direction of the duck-pond, which, since the river had overflowed its banks, bore the name of Swan Lake.

The sound was a hollow, ghastly bellow, not unlike the angry lowing of two fighting oxen; and our dogs rushed out, barking furiously. I started hastily, and called to Jack to bring me my double-barrelled gun, while the mother, Ernest, and Frank rushed into the house. Fritz alone surprised me: he that was so ready to seize his weapons, now stood leaning against one of the supports of the

veranda, laughing most heartily. This relieved my mind, and, reseating myself, I said, "I suppose you know it is nothing but the bellow of a bittern or a marsh-pig?"

"Or," said Fritz, "most likely an evening serenade from Jack's giant frog."

"Ho, ho!" I exclaimed; "this is one of the tricks of that clever young gentleman, is it? I understand now the mystery of the sack, and why he wished to start before us on the way home. — It is all right, mamma," I called out. "It is only the croaking of a frog."

"A frog!" she exclaimed, as she answered my call, followed by Ernest and Frank.

"Yes, mamma, a giant frog, which I brought home for Jack on my last excursion. Is it a European frog?"

"Oh, no!" I replied. "The giant frog is a native of America, and sometimes grows to the size of a rabbit. Another species, which inhabits South Africa, where the heat during both day and night at some parts of the year is most oppressive, keeps up a continual croaking. The giant frog croaks only at night, and his music, when near at hand, is not very agreeable. I hope, however, that our heron will soon put him to silence, and in the mean time we will let him remain."

Jack, who had rushed off quickly to the pond on hearing the unearthly noise, came back while I was speaking, and looked very much annoyed at the behavior of his new plaything.

"It is a great ugly thing, papa," said the boy, "but not half as big as a rabbit. I think it is what they call a bull-frog; but, if it wouldn't croak so loud, I should like to keep it, and see how large it would grow. I don't think the heron, or even the cranes, could swallow it now, even if they were to try."

"You may keep him if you like, my boy," said his mother. "But don't let him come near the house; and as to his noise, we shall perhaps get used to it."

After a few days' rest, my wife begged me to plan a last excursion for the summer to Falcon's Nest, and employ our energies in restoring and finishing the inside of our old summer home. I willingly agreed to her wishes, only waiting till the boys had finished the buffalo-lick, which they were now busy in laying out.

We found every thing as we had left it, but in a very unfinished state. Our first work was to cut the sides of the arched roots into shape, and polish them. The terrace upon these roots was repaired, and the flooring covered with a mixture of tar and resin to make it water-tight. A roof of bark was placed over the upper balcony, outside our old sleeping-apartment, which also overhung the terrace beneath; and across the railings of both we nailed lattice-work, so that we had now two balconies round the tree castle.

The tarpaulin over the sleeping-room was removed to make room for a new roof, formed of bark and tree-branches, similar to that in our Kamtchatka summer-house at Wood Grange. When finished, our tree palace presented an exceedingly attractive appearance.

This completed, Fritz proposed that we should erect a battery on the heights of Shark's Island, on which to place our four-pounder cannon. I fell in with his proposal; but it cost me a great deal of thought.

Arranging my plans at last, we embarked on board the yacht, and sailed to the island. The cannon was first lifted from the carriage, and the latter raised — by strong cords, a windlass, and a pulley — to the top of the rocks. The cords, which had many knots, hung from the summit,

and served as steps for climbing up. It was a difficult task to raise the cannon, and place it on the wagon; but by perseverance we at last succeeded.

It stood with its mouth towards the ocean, and behind it was built a guard-house of boards and bamboo-canes. A tall, thick cane was also placed near the cannon, with a loose flag, fastened to rings by a strong cord, to be drawn up and down for the aid of any voyagers of our colony when out at sea alone. This undertaking occupied two months, and a tumult of delight arose when the flag was hoisted for the first time; and a salute of six shots, which re-echoed from rock to rock, was fired in honor of the occasion.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AFTER TEN YEARS. — PEARL BAY.

CHAPTER has added itself to chapter, as year has added itself to year, since we were cast upon this lonely island, with no other resource than our own industry, and with no other encouragement than has come of sincere faith in God, and our affection for each other.

I shall be satisfied if young people who read this record of our lives and adventures should learn from it how admirably suited is the peaceful, industrious life of a cheerful and united family to the formation of strong, pure, and manly character.

Before continuing my narrative, I will glance back, and give a short sketch of our work and its results during the ten years that we have remained on the island.

Our boys have grown up, in a certain sense, different in mind and person from those accustomed to associate with

others of their own age. Their physical powers have been strengthened, and their minds developed, by labor and by the excursions and discoveries we have made.

The study of languages and literature has been kept up during the rainy seasons, especially by Ernest, who is of a studious disposition, and less actively inclined than his brothers. Fritz, however, is the most proficient in English, which he reads and speaks with great correctness. They are all healthy and handsome young men.

Our dwelling-places, both at Rock House and Falcon's Nest, have during the last few years been much improved, and are now not only attractive in appearance, but convenient and healthful. Rock House especially forms a capital warehouse for our stores, as well as an excellent winter residence.

The greater part of the year, however, we have spent at Falcon's Nest, where we have excellent shelter for our fowls, and stalls for the cattle and sheep, as well as for the game we wish to preserve alive. Here also are the bee-hives, which supply us with honey in great quantities. But the increase in the number of bees, which obliged me to form several new hives, attracted a bird of beautiful plumage, named the "bee-eater," and this necessitated the destruction of all we caught. Two were preserved to adorn our museum, which is still a great pleasure to us, especially on Sunday. The contents of this museum have increased in number so rapidly, that we have been obliged to devote another space in Rock House to these curiosities.

Rock House has also been greatly beautified and improved, both within and without. The veranda has been extended by two wings, one at each side, and the creeping plants at the foot of each bamboo column or support have grown luxuriously, and now twine around them even to

the roof, which they completely cover, hanging down from the eaves in a most picturesque manner, and forming a pleasant shade.

Close to the rock, and under one wing of the veranda, stands the fountain, formed of the turtle's shell; and the splashing of the water as it trickles into the fountain has a pleasant, cooling sound. Another fountain, constructed from a large hollow bamboo-cane, has been erected under the opposite wing, for the sake of symmetry; but we were not fortunate enough to obtain a large turtle-shell for the purpose.

At the end of each wing, the roof of which covers the fountains, two broad steps have been placed; and the whole frontage presents the appearance of the exterior of a house in China.

The landscape before us is in the highest degree romantic and charming, and forms a striking contrast to the ridge of rugged rocks behind.

Between our dwelling and Deliverance Bay are spread out, in order and fertility, shrubs and trees, both European and natives of the soil. Shark's Island is covered with cocoanut-palms and pines. On the strand a thick growth of mangrove-trees resists the advance of the waves.

Near the crest of the rock on Shark's Island stands the guard-house, with its four-pounder cannon, and its raised flag fluttering in the air. In the foreground lies the old duck-pond, enlarged by an overflow of the sea, which has covered the greater part of Jackal Marsh, and now forms a considerable lake, on whose dark blue waters float in social companionship majestic black swans, snow-white geese, and many-colored ducks.

Our gardens and plantations extend nearly to the lake; and on the marshy ground around it, and through the

rushes, can be distinguished now and then the red crest of the sultan marsh-fowl, the purple flamingo, the red-tipped feathers of the stately herons, and the Numidian crane, all associating in perfect harmony, and quite domesticated. Beneath the stately trees and shrubberies marches the ostrich, quite at his ease. The cranes and bustards, as usual, keep close to our fields, while the beautiful Canadian or heath-fowl, and the mountain-hen, can be heard rustling in the bushes.

Above us fly the pigeons here and there, or, seated on the roof of the veranda, dress their beautiful plumage before our eyes, their soft cooing mingling with the sound of the trickling fountains. In fact, the region once so wild and unfruitful seems to have vanished, and, as the consequence of our industry and perseverance, its site has become a veritable Paradise on earth.

On the shore of Jackal River, from the highest ground almost to the water's edge, grow orange and lemon trees, Indian figs, and many thorn-bearing shrubs so close that it seems impossible for even a mouse to slip in. I had some thoughts once of cutting a road through this thicket; but it presented such a bulwark against intruders, that I considered it safer to leave it.

The Spanish canes render the way round the marsh equally impassable, and, as the drawbridge is always up, Rock Castle is protected on all sides. At night the stillness is so great, that no sound can be heard but the croaking of Jack's bull-frog, which has hitherto escaped the jaws of the heron or the cranes.

Between our dwelling and the Jackal River we had preserved a little corner in which to raise the cotton-plant, and at Wood Grange the cotton-fields are very extensive. In fact, our kitchen-gardens, orchards, plantations, corn-

fields, and shrubberies are, at the end of ten years, as productive and flourishing as I could wish.

We found difficulty in keeping off thieves from the corn and fruit, in the shape of squirrels, parrots, and even the wild birds we had domesticated, beside sparrows, thrushes,

ANTELOPES.

and field-mice; yet, by one device or another, we generally succeeded in saving our crops, and securing a plentiful harvest.

On Shark's Island also the rabbits have multiplied amazingly, and they have not only supplied us with food from year to year, but also with their soft and useful fur

Whale Island, though almost as fruitful as Shark's Island in vegetation, proved unsuitable to the antelopes. Perhaps the island was too exposed for these delicate little creatures, for they did not thrive or increase in number till we removed them to Falcon's Nest.

Since then I have carried to Whale Island all our arrangements for candle-making, tanning, cleansing and combing wool, and all other work that has an offensive smell; and our workshops are now all covered in and roofed.

Wood Grange Farm is in a flourishing condition: we have a large number of sheep, goats, pigs, and poultry, as well as oxen and cows.

Storm and Grumbler are still living, as well as the good old cow saved from the wreck; but young cows now add to our supply of milk and cream, and we are provided with mutton, beef, and veal from our own herds and flocks.

The boys retain their old love for giving names to the animals. To one, a young pet cow, of a pretty creamy white, we gave the name Snow; and an ox with a tremendous voice, the boys call Roarer.

There are also young wild asses so fleet of foot that we have given them the names of Arrow and Brisk; and one of Fawn's pups Jack honored with the curious title of Cocoa. The boys will sometimes even now make it necessary for us to stop our ears as they shout, "Oh! hallo! hio! Cocoa!"

Hunter, the jackal, has been dead some time, and his place supplied by another, found, as before, by Fritz, in a hole in a rock. He is not so tame as Hunter the First, but quite as clever.

At Falcon's Nest, as well as at Rock Castle and Wood

Grange, the kitchen-gardens and potato-fields have flourished wonderfully. The shoals of herring have never failed to visit us yearly; and, with our large and increasing farm-stock, a supply of game has not been so necessary.

In fact, I found myself, at the end of ten years, the owner of fields and meadows, orchards and plantations, and three different residences, and as rich in farm-stock as a wealthy farmer in the dear old country.

We have all learnt experience in our industry. My boys have grown from youth to manhood, and gained both mental and physical strength.

Fritz, now in his twenty-fourth year, is of middle size, but muscular, high-spirited, and rather hasty.

Ernest, two years younger, is tall and slight, cool and indolent, but far superior to his brother in intellectual power and refined tastes.

Jack, at twenty, is nearly as tall as Fritz, and very like him in many respects, but of larger build, with an active mind and body, and great stability of character.

Frank, the youngest, differs from all his brothers, yet has some of the qualities of each.

They are all candid, honorable young men, who respect religion, are dutiful to their mother and myself, and warmly attached to each other.

Such is our little colony at the end of ten years, during which we have seen no human being except each other; yet we still have hope that we may yet enjoy the companionship of our fellow-men. If at times I have felt my heart sinking when I considered our isolated condition, I have concealed my trouble from my dear ones as, I doubt not, have they their despondent thoughts from me.

My sons are still fond of making excursions, and are

often absent the whole day in search of new discoveries. The pinnace and the yacht have been kept in good repair, and Fritz's canoe is greatly strengthened and improved. The pinnace still lies in the dock I formed for her, in days gone by, by damming up a portion of the river near Flamingo Marsh. We have more than once been out to sea in this pretty boat, — my wife, the four boys, and myself, — venturing even out of sight of land; but a recollection of the storm we once experienced made me hesitate to take such a voyage often, although we always had the compass on board.

Fritz, as fearless as ever, often paddles his canoe to a great distance; and it is unusual for him to return either without having made some new discovery, or secured a supply of sea-birds, dead or alive.

On one occasion, after paying a visit to the Green Valley, he made a large capture of guinea-fowls; and the boys at once hastened to build an enclosure for them of bamboo-canes, of such an enormous size that it looked like a large bird-trap, with a trellis-work of thin laths for a sloping roof. The birds were attracted to this large cage by throwing a quantity of seeds and berries on the ground within it, and after a while they became so tame, that they would come to our dinner-table for any little tid-bits we liked to throw them. Many wild birds have been brought to these cages, and with little difficulty tamed in the same manner.

One day quite lately Fritz started early in his canoe, promising to return before nightfall; but evening approached, and no trace of his boat could be seen on the sea, even with the telescope. Feeling anxious, the boys and I proceeded at once to the dock, and, launching the yacht, crossed to Shark's Island, and mounted the heights

on which our guard-house and cannon stood. The flag was always hoisted while any of our party were at sea, as a beacon to help them to return; and after again sweeping the horizon with my glass, and seeing no signs of the canoe, I fired a signal from the cannon.

The report was re-echoed from the rocks; but for a long time no canoe was to be seen. At last a little black spot was observed floating on the water, and through the telescope we discovered it to be our Greenlander in his canoe. He neared us slowly and with seeming indifference, as if in no hurry to reach the coast. We all raised a joyful hurrah, and descended quickly to the strand, in hope of meeting him when he reached it, that he might return with us in the yacht to Rock House.

But, as he approached the island, I understood in a moment the cause of his slow movements. An enormous booty floated, bound, at the side of the canoe; and by the head of the walrus in the bow lay a similar bundle; while behind the boat a bag of considerable size was being towed, which must have greatly interfered with the rower's progress.

"Welcome, Fritz, welcome!" I exclaimed. "What news do you bring from land and sea? I perceive you have brought a large booty, and I praise God that you have at last returned safe."

"Yes, I do thank Heaven," he replied, "that I am home again safe and well, with all my cargo; besides, I have made discoveries, and met with adventures, that will, I know, be greatly appreciated."

At home that evening, after a little rest and refreshment to our traveller, we listened with great interest to an account of his adventures.

"I must ask you first, dear father," said the young

man, "to pardon me for leaving this morning without your knowledge; but I was anxious to start early on an excursion I have long wished to make, and I did not like to awaken you so soon. Besides, I knew that my canoe, being light and easily paddled, would carry me safely, even in case of a storm. I took with me a supply of provisions and a flask of mead, filled my water-skin, fixed the mariner's compass right before my eyes on the deck, and then bound a harpoon to the stern, and supplied myself with a boat-hook and some fishing-lines, but not my best fire-arms, lest they should get spoiled by being wet.

"I had, however, a couple of pistols in my girdle, and my eagle was perched near me on the prow, as if watching for prey. It was a beautiful morning, and the calm sea attracted me irresistibly to carry out my plan. I stepped on board the canoe, and, seating myself, paddled quickly towards the current from the Jackal River, which soon carried me out to sea, while I carefully watched the bearings of the needle in the compass, that I might know how to steer my way back.

"As I passed the spot where our ship was wrecked, I saw beneath the clear water a quantity of useful articles lying at the bottom of the sea, — cannons, iron bars, and shot of all sizes, — which I really think might be raised at low water.

"I then turned my canoe in quite a different direction from any that we have ever taken at sea, yet keeping near the coast, and continuing for some distance under broken and overhanging rocks.

"Sea-birds of every description flew screaming over my head, or, perched on the rocks, seemed to watch my progress with suspicion. Farther on a number of marine

animals, such as seals, walruses, and sea-bears, were lying in the clefts of the rocks, and seemed ready to spring from them upon me, in spite of their enormous bodies.

"I must own I was glad to escape from these wild-looking creatures by pushing farther out to sea, and, after rowing for about an hour, I entered a current that led me to a narrow stream under arched rocks, forming a portal which Nature, in magnificent grandeur, had built, as if to shame the imitations of man in their so-called architecture.

"Here and there were openings in the vaulted rocky roof, which raised itself to many hundred feet above the level of the sea; and a most unusual number of sea-birds, which had built their nests among the rocks, were flying about. They were scarcely larger than wrens, and their white breasts contrasted pleasantly with the light green feathers of the wings and the dark plumage of the rest of the body.

"Thousands of their nests appeared on every side, and seemed to be formed, not very skilfully, however, of feathers and thistledown. Strange to say, each of these nests rested upon a kind of support resembling the bowl of a spoon.

"I separated one of the empty nests carefully from the rock, and discovered that the interior was constructed of dry moss, mixed with a substance somewhat like fish-glue, which fixes it to the rocks, and I have brought it home in my fishing-tackle bag for you to examine."

"I should imagine, from your description, that this nest belongs to the sea-swallow. The Chinese consider it a great delicacy for their table, and it forms a valuable article of commerce in China. — I think, dear wife, we might make a trial of this nest, if you will cook it for us to taste."

"On leaving the rocky vault, which extended for some distance," continued Fritz, "I entered the waters of a magnificent bay, from the shore of which a fertile plain stretched far away inland. While my little skiff floated swiftly over the clear transparent waters, I noticed a quantity of shell-fish, similar to the oyster, lying at the bottom of the sea. They appeared to be tied together, and fastened to the underlying rocks by filaments or hair-like threads, and, thinking they might be better eating than those of Safety Bay, I fished up a few with my boat-hook, and, being near, threw them on shore, intending, on my way back, to place them in a bag tied to the side of the canoe, and by keeping it half in the water, preserve them fresh.

"But, when I reached the spot on my return, I found that the heat of the sun had opened the shells, and that the contents were unfit for food. I fished up about a bushel more, and these I have brought home, not because I now think they are fit to eat, but on account of the little seeds which I found in the flesh when I attempted to eat one. Some of these seeds are about the size of a hazel-nut, and just like pearls. I have brought home a large number in my bamboo-box."

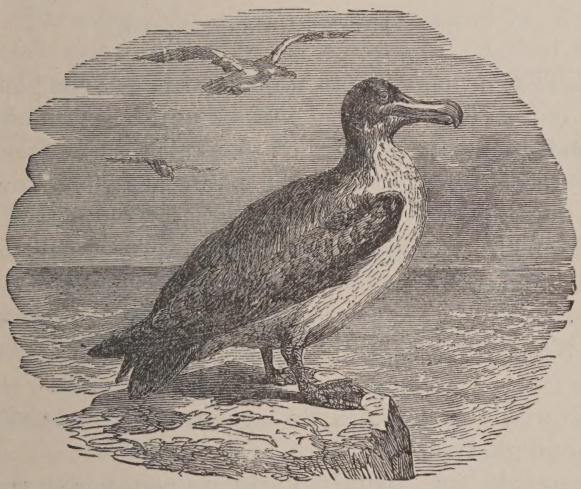
"Show them to me, Fritz," I said; and, as he placed them in my hand, I saw that they were shining, beautiful pearls.

"You have made a valuable discovery," I continued. "These pearls are worth a large sum; and yet they are as useless here (as regards profit) as the doubloons in the captain's sea-chest. However, take care of them, my son, they may be of use some day."

"I ate my dinner after this discovery," continued Fritz, "and then started on my return home. I noticed many

sea-birds of different kinds after leaving Pearl Bay, as I must now call it; and, before reaching the current which led into the open sea, an albatross, frigate-birds, sea-gulls, and wild ducks flew and fluttered impudently around me.

"I managed to knock down one or two of the largest birds, and to shoot others; but I had some difficulty in conquering the albatross, who was only slightly wounded



THE ALBATROSS.

in the wing. He kicked with his feet, and struggled so violently, that I expected he would escape.

"At last I bound his legs and wings, and continued my homeward journey. It certainly was a great relief when I arrived in familiar waters, and saw the welcome flag flying from the top of the rock."

Here ended, as I supposed, Fritz's narrative; but when he left me to attend to the wounded bird, and make

him comfortable for the night, I could not quite understand the reason of so much anxiety on his part respecting this bird's fate. I discovered the cause, however, before retiring to rest.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE.

AFTER attending to the albatross, Fritz left his mother and brothers examining the birds, and made me understand that he wished to speak with me.

"Father," he said, "I have not told all. The strangest part remains. While the poor albatross was trying to escape, I saw, wrapped about his leg, a piece of linen, and, when I had secured him, I took it off, and found written on it in English, in a kind of red ink, this message:—

"'*Who will rescue an unfortunate English girl from a cave in the lonely rocks near a volcano?*'"

The words sent a thrill through every nerve, and made my brain giddy.

"Can it be true, Fritz?" I said, "a poor young creature alone on these desolate shores? How did she get here? and what has she to live upon? You have done well not to speak of this before the others. It would make needless anxiety for your dear mother. The bird may have come from very distant shores. There are surely no volcanoes near us."

"I could send a message by the albatross, father," said my undaunted boy, who was not affected by my gloomy view. "He will be able to fly in a day or two."

"And I must arrange for you," I said, "to go out

on a voyage of discovery without exciting suspicion or alarm."

On the third day after receiving the message, Fritz wrote on another piece of linen these words: "*Trust in God. Help is no doubt at hand.*"

This he tied to one of the legs of the albatross, and the message he had received to the other. Then taking the bird down to the beach, he loosed his bonds, and set him free. For a few moments the creature stood as if stupefied, then suddenly rose in the air, and although he moved his wing with difficulty, to the great joy of Fritz he soon disappeared.

During that day I took the first opportunity, when we were all seated together in the veranda, to remark, "I have been thinking, dear wife, that our eldest son is now of an age to be dependent on himself, and that I shall leave him free to act according to his own judgment, and to take excursions or voyages alone, if he considers it desirable, without asking permission. Of course, if he asks my advice, I shall be ready to give it.

Fritz was quite overcome by my confidence in him; while his mother, feeling proud of her son, rose, and, putting her arms round him, kissed him affectionately, saying, with tears in her eyes, "God bless and preserve thee, my son!" then, to conceal her emotion, she hastened away to prepare the evening meal.

The boys, or young men as I should now call them, were not a little surprised at my remarks about Fritz; but, light-hearted as ever, they soon ran to their mother to beg her to prepare some oysters in the shell for supper. Frank, who could not wait, tried to open two or three with his knife, and found within two of them three large and three small pearls, which appeared so beautiful that a new idea struck the boys.

"If we could make an oyster-bed in Deliverance Bay," said Ernest, "we should have pearls by bushels."

"You might have pearls," I said, "but not oysters fit for food. This beautiful pearl is only formed in the flesh of an oyster when it is diseased, or after the shell has been injured."

This slightly damped the ardor of my young people, yet they still determined that, on the first opportunity, Fritz should take us to Pearl Bay, that we might obtain a store of oysters for a new bed.

With this excursion in prospect, Ernest also constructed a kind of scoop and a cutting-machine, for removing the empty nests of the sea-swallows, of which such beautiful jelly could be made. Fritz worked zealously but silently in making space in his canoe for another seat. His brothers naturally imagined that he was trying to make his canoe suitable to accommodate one of them as well as himself, and he did not undeceive them.

We now began to prepare for an excursion to Pearl Bay and the other places discovered by Fritz on his last voyage; and a very rich store of provisions was packed for our journey. Fresh pemmican, cassava-cakes, pastry from wheaten flour, nuts, almonds, and a cask of mead as a refreshing drink, were stowed away in our yacht, and on an early day we embarked, with favorable wind, and leaving the mother under the care of Francis.

We were accompanied by Master Nip the second, Nip the first having been dead for some years, as well as poor old Turk. Floss, who was still brave in her old age, was not left behind, and Fawn and Brownie gladly joined us on board.

Fritz took the lead in his canoe to show us the way; and Jack, who wished to be pilot, occupied the seat in the

canoe which Fritz had prepared for another purpose. Following in his track, I determined to hoist a sail while we were in these peaceful waters.

The various points touched by Fritz were pointed out by him as we sailed along in the track of the canoe. The sea was calm and smooth, and as transparent as a looking-glass. The nautilus passed us in full sail. We saw the shell-fish beneath the clear transparent water, and numbers of sea-birds were skimming its surface with rapid wing. As we passed this spot, we gave it the name "Nautilus Bay."

At length we approached the grand portal to the stream which ran beneath vaulted rocks, and were astonished at the rugged grandeur of the spot. The majestic beauty of these arched rocks struck me with awe. The great Builder had here formed one of Nature's temples, whose beauty and elegance far exceeded the most stately cathedral ever erected by man.

The sea-swallows, however, soon diverted our attention from the wonders of Nature; and Ernest and Jack begged me to allow them to land upon the rocks, and cut down as many of these succulent nests as they could find empty.

The passage beneath the vaulted rocks was very pleasant, and, on arriving in the broad beautiful bay to which Fritz had given the name "Pearl Bay," I decided to stay all night, and sleep on board the yacht.

A fire was accordingly lighted on the shore, and we cast anchor at a little distance. The dogs remained near the fire; and Fritz, after mooring his canoe alongside the yacht, came on board for the night.

We slept peacefully, except when disturbed by the howlings of the jackals on shore, which not only provoked

the dogs to bark, but also induced the jackal, Hunter, to join in the howls.

At break of day we were all on the move, and, after a hearty breakfast, continued our voyage, Fritz still leading the way in his canoe. During this day we managed to secure a large store of oysters, and I also found on the shore a kind of vegetable kali or soda, and collected a quantity to carry on board, as I well knew it would be useful.

On arriving at the point to which Fritz had extended his exploring excursion, he came on board while his brothers were absent, and said, "Father, do you think you can find your way back without my assistance?"

"Of course I do, my son, and I quite understand your anxiety to discover the volcanic island. Have you sufficient provision on board? for you must not go home to alarm your mother."

"No, father, I will not do that. I have enough provision, and I hope to discover the volcanic island. Before you and my brothers are up, I shall turn back, and you can tell them, when they miss me, that I am acting independently in thus leaving you, as you informed them I was at liberty to do."

But Fritz was not to leave us next morning as he wished, owing to the appearance of a very unpleasant visitor in the evening twilight. We had been preparing our supper on the shore, and Fritz was still in his canoe, making arrangements for an early start in the morning.

Our watch-fires were lighted; yet that did not prevent us from hearing a deep, low roar, that echoed among the rocks like thunder. I could imagine nothing less than the approach of leopards or panthers; for, while the sound sent a thrill of terror through my veins, I did

not imagine any thing so dreadful as the presence of a lion.

But we were not long in suspense. A huge beast approached at three bounds, but was stopped by a stream which flowed between the shore and the inland country. I saw in a moment that it was an enormous lion, such as are exhibited in menageries in Europe. At finding this bar to his progress, the creature seated himself on his haunches like a cat, and glared at us with his fierce eyes. The dogs and Nip slunk away to the space in front of the fire, which concealed them from the enemy; and for myself, I seemed almost paralyzed, and unable to recover my presence of mind. The lion rose presently on his four legs, and began pacing up and down, as if searching for a convenient place for springing across the stream, lashing his tail while he walked, with angry impatience.

Again the deep, low growl sounded in our ears, as the animal stooped to quench his thirst in the running stream; and, after again wandering backwards and forwards without finding a spot narrow enough for him to spring over, he laid himself down on his stomach, and glared at us with flaming eyes.

Before I could decide whether it was best to fire, or to return to our boat, the sound of a shot passing through the air in the growing darkness so startled us, that Ernest exclaimed, in terror, "Father, Fritz has fired from his canoe!"

At the same moment the lion sprang into the air, with an awful roar or groan, stood still for a few seconds, staggered, then fell on his knees, and remained without movement.

"We are saved!" I cried, as we rushed back to the boat. "The lion is shot to the heart. He will not move

again, thanks to Fritz! Remain in the boat, boys, while I go to assist him: he may still be in danger."

I sprang again on shore in shallow water, and the dogs met me with joyful expressions of their relief from the fear of danger; but these gambols were soon interrupted. As I approached the spot where the dead lion lay, a second smaller but not less formidable one came from the wood, and with one bound alighted opposite the spot we had left to return to the boat.

It was evidently the lioness, in search of her royal mate, and well for us that they had not been together at first. Reaching the place where the monarch of the forest lay, she felt him with her paw, sniffed round the spot, licked his bleeding wounds, and then, gnashing her teeth, uttered a howl of distress that echoed horribly through the night air.

Puff! another shot; and the lioness uttered a cry of pain. She had been wounded in the right foot, but was still dangerous. I also fired my shot, breaking her jaw, and causing her to fall, with howls of pain and rage.

Our dogs now took courage to rush upon the prostrate animal. Then followed a fearful scene of warfare too horrible to describe. The darkness, the growls of the lioness, the howls of the wounded dogs, I can never forget. I remained for a moment too much overcome to fire a second shot, and in that moment the monster, with one stroke of her uninjured paw, crushed out the life of poor Floss, who had seized her by the throat. The terrible beast was dead; but it had cost us the life of one of our dear, old, brave champions.

With cries of joy we called Ernest and Jack from the boat to take part in the triumph. The watch-fires were again replenished, and we returned with torches to ex-

amine the battle-field, and remove the body of our brave Floss.

It was not without tears from her young masters that she was laid in a deep grave; Ernest promising his brothers to compose a suitable epitaph on their old companion.

The wounds of Fawn and Brownie were not dangerous, and after anointing them with oil, and supplying water, we left the dogs at the watch-fires while we lay down to sleep.

Rising late, we proceeded farther up the bay to the spot described by Fritz as being as fertile as the Green Valley. As we sailed along the coast, I noticed the entrance to a little river which flowed between a charming country and the outskirts of a forest. We entered it, and after proceeding a little way, quite thoughtlessly anchored on the forest side.

Ernest and Jack, with the two dogs, went on shore to explore a little, and the jackal soon followed them, while Fritz and myself remained on the boat.

We were conversing on the subject always uppermost in the mind of Fritz, — the possibility of rescuing the English girl who had sent the message. My other sons had not been long absent, when we were much startled at hearing a gun fired on shore, followed by a great cry and a second shot.

Fritz seized his gun, sprang on shore, and rushed hastily to the spot, from which now sounded the fierce barking of the dogs and the yells of the jackal. I followed quickly, and as we drew near another shot whizzed by; and presently the words, "Victory! victory!" resounded through the air in joyful tones.

Fritz was more rapid in his movements; and when I at

last overtook him, I was alarmed at seeing him, with Ernest, supporting his brother Jack, who, pale and trembling, seemed ready to fall.

"My dear boy," I exclaimed, "what has happened? Where are you injured?"

"I do not know," he replied, his teeth chattering as he

WILD BOARS.

spoke. "Some monster attacked me, and I thought it was another lion."

"I do not believe Jack is really hurt, father," said Ernest; "but we have had an encounter with a wild boar —an enormous beast — with tusks at least six inches long. He was digging in the soil, and, when the dogs attacked him, he rushed at poor Jack and knocked him down: you know Jack is always so daring in danger, and he went too

close. My first shot disabled the creature, and made it possible for Jack to get up; and the dogs, with the jackal and my second shot, followed by one from Fritz, completed the victory."

"I hope you are not really injured by the horrid beast," I said, as I examined his chest and his arms. "You have had a serious shock, my boy. To be thrown down by such a creature is enough to shake the strongest nerves, especially after what occurred last night, and I thank God that you have escaped more terrible danger."

I gave the trembling patient a glass of canary-sack, a flask of which I had fortunately brought with me, and, leading him to our little cabin on board the yacht, told him to lie down, hoping that a little refreshing sleep would calm his nerves.

"Father," said Ernest, when I returned to examine the large booty he had secured, "this animal has made a discovery for us. He was digging for truffles, and there are quantities of them here. I thought at first they were potatoes: I have a few here to show you. Master Nip dug them up also, and ate a large quantity before I could stop him."

"This is a splendid discovery, Ernest," I said, after examining the tubular root; "and, if I am not mistaken, they are of the best species. You must obtain a supply to carry home to your mother. But now let us see what is to be done with the monster which has caused us so much alarm: it must not be left here for the dogs and the jackal to devour."

I made this remark because I could see that Fritz was anxious to assist with the preparation of the boar, and therefore unwilling to leave it till the next day.

"Well," exclaimed Fritz, as we advanced closer to the

monstrous animal, "this will be a good opportunity to replace our Westphalia hams: the haunches of this creature will be of an enormous size." The removal of the skin, and the cutting up of the body into joints, occupied nearly the whole day.

Ernest requested that the head be dried whole, and preserved for our museum, to which I readily consented. The dogs and the jackal were feasted with the refuse. They were, however, employed by Ernest to discover the truffles, obtaining quite as many as he wished.

Fritz broke off large branches from the trees, which he interlaced one with another to form sledges, by which to carry our booty to the shore. In loading I noticed among the truffles some roots of a different shape and color, and on opening one, found that it contained a ball of yellowish wool, which I knew was the produce of a tree growing in Nankin, a country of China, and much used in Europe for the manufacture of a material for dresses both of men and women.

This discovery greatly pleased me, as I knew my wife would be glad of the wool, to spin into thread, and weave. The dogs drew two of the tree sledges, and Fritz and Ernest the others, so that we reached the shore with our booty, and carried it on board, without accident. Jack assisted in this work, for, although he still looked pale and shaken, his long sleep had refreshed him.

After our work was finished, we again stepped on shore, and lighted a fire between stones, as usual, to cook our supper. As soon as it was clear and glowing, we placed potatoes in the hot ashes, and some slices of the boar's ham on the stones. I was glad to observe that Jack enjoyed

Called *Nankeen* in England, and very much used at the time this story was written.

his supper of fried ham and baked potatoes as greatly as the rest of us.

I decided to start early next morning on the homeward voyage, for the flesh of the wild boar required to be salted and smoked as quickly as possible. Besides, we had been absent four days, and I knew the mother would be anxious.

Another reason for this return presented itself. I was unwilling to hinder Fritz from attempting the discovery of the writer of the message, although I looked upon it as a wild scheme, and likely to fail. However, the yacht and canoe could easily start together, and by degrees we should lose sight of Fritz, without causing undue surprise to his brothers. We therefore sailed next morning at an early hour, and arrived without accident, in Deliverance Bay, to the great joy of the mother and Frank, though the absence of Fritz caused my wife some little uneasiness.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE SEARCH FOR FRITZ.—A VISITOR.

OUR adventures proved deeply interesting to the mother and Frank, but created anxiety in the mind of my wife, respecting the dangers we still incurred in these voyages and excursions. Our description of the battle with the lioness, and the near approach of the lion, his glaring eyes, and his frightful roar, filled her with apprehension. The account of Jack's danger, when attacked and thrown down by the wild boar, made her

tremble; and she could scarcely be induced to believe that he was uninjured, especially as he still looked pale.

Frank mourned over the death of poor old Floss with true regret, while Ernest produced the epitaph he had written to be placed over her grave.

Not having heard this effusion, I asked him to read it aloud. It ran as follows: —

BENEATH IN THE COOL GROUND RESTS
FLOSS,
A FAITHFUL DOG,
AND ALSO A TRUE FRIEND.
BRAVE, STRONG, AND HEROIC IN THE HUNT,
FEARLESS ON THE BATTLE-FIELD, AND
WATCHFUL FOR THE INTERESTS OF THOSE SHE SERVED,
SHE MET HER DEATH
FROM THE PAW OF A LION, WHICH
SHE HEROICALLY ATTACKED
TO SAVE THOSE SHE LOVED
FROM A SIMILAR FATE.

"Capital, Ernest!" cried Jack. "It shall be placed on her grave as soon as possible. I'll take care of that."

Our next care was for our booty. The hams of the wild boar, and other portions not needful for present use, were soon prepared for smoking. I knew that the head would make a delicious dish if baked in the Hottentot fashion; but I would not break my promise to Ernest, that he should have it in his museum.

I forgot to state that I had managed, before leaving the spot, to take off the skins of the lions, as I knew they would make beautiful rugs for the feet in winter, if carefully cleaned and dressed. These skins, with that of the wild boar and the head of the creature, were carried next day to our tannery workshop on Shark's Island.

Five days passed, during which we worked hard at

dressing the skins, Fritz still remaining absent. Our anxiety at length became so great, that I determined to follow him, at least as far as Pearl Bay.

My proposal created great satisfaction, and my wife readily agreed to be of the party, especially when I explained to her that I intended to sail in the pinnace. With a large store of provision and a favorable wind, we embarked one fine morning, quitting Rock House amidst joyous hurrahs and the barking of the dogs, who accompanied us on board. We very quickly reached the entrance to Church River, as we had named the stream beneath the vaulted rocks; but, in passing through the opening, we came suddenly to a standstill, as if we had run aground.

The shock threw us all together on the deck, and I thought we had struck upon some rocks, for some object in front seemed to bar our passage; but all at once before our astonished eyes the obstruction dissolved into water. At the distance of a few paces we heard a great noise, and presently saw what appeared to be an immense waterspout rise in the air, then fall in heavy showers.

"Is not this one of those waterspouts which are so dangerous to sailors?" exclaimed Frank, who had been the first to recover from the shock.

"I do not think this is a waterspout, Frank," I replied, "because it rose in two columns of water, and a real waterspout has the appearance of a pillar. As it sometimes bursts over a ship, it is of course a dangerous object to meet."

I was about to express my opinion that what we had seen was caused by electricity, when another, though not so violent, shock induced me to believe that this time we were really aground. But the object against which we

had struck was now evidently swimming, and, looking out, I saw an ungainly mass floating near us, which I recognized as an enormous fish.

I prepared my little cannon, to be in readiness to fire at the monster when it again rose to the surface, which happened in a few minutes; and two shots took fatal effect upon it. It struggled violently, then swam to a sand-bank, on which it sunk, leaving a trail of blood on the foaming surface of the sea. I believed the creature to be the cachalot whale, and knew that the supposed waterspout was caused by the jets of water which these creatures throw into the air when they are angry. It had, no doubt, been sleeping on the water when we ran against it; and the jets from its nostrils were on account of its rage at being disturbed.

We approached the sand-bank, and saw that the whale was at least forty feet long, and not quite dead, for it lashed the shallow water with its tail so violently as to completely cover us with water and foam. We found it necessary and also merciful to put it out of its misery, and the animal very soon breathed his last, and moved no more.

We were about to express our joy at this unexpected triumph, when another circumstance suddenly attracted our attention. At some distance we perceived a canoe, and paddling hastily towards us, as we believed, a savage inhabitant of the country. As soon as he found himself observed, he disappeared behind a promontory.

I was alarmed at the thought that he was gone to fetch others of his tribe, and we re-loaded the cannon, got our arms and ammunition ready, and waited for his re-appearance.

It was not long before a canoe with a single rower again came in sight, and seemed also to be acting as a spy upon

our movements. I hoisted a white flag, as a token of our wish to be friendly, but in vain. This savage also disappeared, and presently one, and then another, showed himself on a point of land at a little distance, and then vanished. Once more the savage in the canoe presented himself. I therefore immediately seized my speaking-trumpet, and uttered a few words of our peaceful intentions in the Malay tongue, that I had learned from a book of travels, but with no result.

At last Jack, who was becoming impatient, took up the speaking-trumpet, and pronounced with great energy a few nautical words in English, which, like my own, appeared to be lost in the air.

In a few moments we saw the canoe approaching, with the savage in it, and a green bough fastened to the prow. As it drew nearer, a burst of laughter greeted the rower; for in the swarthy savage we recognized our own Fritz, who with friendly signs, and kisses thrown to us comically from his hand, paddled swiftly towards the boat.

We took our brave boy on board, canoe and all, where, amid much laughter, he was fondly kissed and welcomed, in spite of his blackened face. He promised an explanation, impossible, he said, while questions and inquiries fell upon him in a storm on every side.

At last I drew him apart, and asked, in a low voice, if his journey had been successful.

"Yes, father," he replied, "entirely so; and I have pleasant news for you."

I could not question further, as his mother drew near, and insisted that he should wash off the dark stains, as she could not bear to look at him with that face.

He went immediately to comply with her request, and stood before us once more in his own person.

His first question related to the firing he had heard near the entrance to the bay.

"I was much alarmed," he said; "for I never supposed you would put out to sea in your pinnace, now that she is rigged so like a yacht, and I imagined, therefore, that it was a strange vessel with two guns similar to ours."

Our adventure with the cachalot whale greatly interested him, and, when I asked if he could recommend a suitable spot in which to cast anchor, he replied in a mysterious tone, "There is a pretty little island not far from here. I will lead you to it at once."

I smiled at his eagerness to lower his canoe into the sea again, while his mother and brothers looked on in surprise, and wondered what great discovery he was about to show us.

He unfurled the sails of the yacht, ran up the rigging, drew the ropes, and, telling me which way to steer, sprang lightly from the boat to his canoe, and led the way, like a pilot, to a picturesque little island in Pearl Bay.

During this little voyage I had time to give the mother some account of the message which Fritz had found tied to the leg of the albatross, and the reply he had sent back by the same messenger. I wished also to explain the object of his recent absence, and the happy result of his enterprise; so that she might be prepared for the appearance of the young English girl, who, no doubt, was on the island to which he was leading us.

"Why did you not tell me this before?" she asked; and I could see how much the news had startled her.

"I was unwilling to raise hopes that might not be realized," I replied; "but now, happily, there is no longer need for concealment."

The boys evidently suspected something, but I said nothing to them.

"Let this young English girl make her own way," I said to myself. "If she is worth any thing, she will easily do that."

We anchored on the shores of a little island, near a beautifully situated wood; and Fritz immediately landed, followed by myself and his brothers, who assisted the mother to reach the shore.

I saw the young men glance with great curiosity at a little cavity between the branches of a tall palm-tree, which appeared to have been used as a resting-place, and before which stood a fire-hearth, constructed of pebbles, and in the centre of the fire, for a saucepan, a beautiful but gigantic mussel-shell.

Fritz was in advance of us, looking earnestly into the wood, and as if he scarcely noticed that we had landed.

Presently he raised his voice and shouted, as one sailor shouts to another, "Ho! hallo there, up aloft!"

We heard a rustling in the tree, and presently there appeared, gliding lightly down the stem, instead of a young girl, a beautiful youth, dressed in sailor's clothes.

On seeing us, the young stranger stood still, looking greatly embarrassed, and we were also too much taken by surprise to speak.

Fritz came to the rescue. Taking off his plumed hat, he led the young sailor to his mother, and exclaimed, "Let me introduce to you, my mother, the young Lord Edward Montrose. Will you not welcome him as a friend and a brother?"

We hastened to offer our earnest welcome to the timid stranger, whose manners were so refined and gentle as to win our hearts at once.

As the head of the family, I advanced, and, taking the hand of the forsaken youth, promised him my friendship

and protection. He replied timidly in a few words, and then turned to my wife, as if asking for her motherly care.

It was plain that Fritz did not wish to betray the sex of the stranger to his brothers while she wore the sailor's attire.

The young men were overjoyed at the prospect of a new companion. Even the dogs welcomed his appearance, and frolicked around him joyfully. Determined on this occasion to prepare a royal feast, my sons ran hastily to the yacht and the canoe for camp-table and stools, and other necessary articles of crockery and table appliances, though it was rather before the regular supper-hour.

The mother, also, seemed ready, not only to employ her skill in preparing a rich repast, but also to make delicious dishes with almonds, raisins, and cassava-cakes sweetened with sugar. The young Edward nearly betrayed his sex by the knowledge he displayed during these performances; but the young men were still deceived.

The appearance of a human being of any description, after so many years of isolation from our fellow-creatures, would of itself create excitement; but this gentle, modest, silent youth, who had been thus mysteriously discovered, was in himself so charming, that I could quite understand their anxiety to make him feel himself at home with them.

When I considered it advisable to give the signal for retiring, the stranger rose at once to proceed to his home in the tree; but he was prevented by my wife, who had prepared a more agreeable night's lodging on board the yacht, and without a word he followed her.

Having lighted the watch-fires, my sons seated them-

selves round them to discuss the event of the evening over a number of pine-apples, while with strong curiosity they questioned Fritz.

"What induced you to go in search of a stranger?" asked Frank; "or, at least, how did you know where to find him?"

Fritz, in reply, related his adventure with the albatross, described the message which was tied to its leg, and all that had occurred since, from beginning to end; but he so mixed up the name of Jenny with that of Lord Edward Montrose, that his brothers began to suspect something of the truth. A question from Jack settled the matter.

"Did you not understand the Malay words that papa spoke, Fritz?"

"Yes," he replied. "But they alarmed me still more, for my head was full of Malay pirates; the young Edward having told me that they infested this coast. But, when I heard those English nautical terms, I believed it was an English vessel coming in search of Miss Jenny, and I"—

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the boys merrily; and Ernest exclaimed, "You have betrayed your secret, Mr. Frederick. Your young lord is transformed into a young lady, and our new brother into a gentle and amiable sister. Long live Miss Jenny!"

Fritz was for a moment disconcerted, but soon joined heartily in the joyous cheers of his brothers, till at length I reminded them that it was time to retire to rest for the night.

I related to my wife the discovery made by our younger boys, and on rising next morning she arranged, by a little alteration, some of her own attire, to suit the young girl who had been thus thrown upon her motherly care and tenderness. Providing her with a comb to smooth out

her long golden tresses, which had, on the evening previous, hung loosely on her shoulders, and given her, in a boy's dress, the appearance of a youth of fourteen, she presented her to the family in her real character.

The young men came forward at once to address her as "Miss Jenny," feeling half inclined to rally her on the deception she had practised upon them; but she looked so gentle and ladylike, and blushed so painfully, that they changed their tactics, and met her with brotherly kindness and respect.

For breakfast, Fritz had made some chocolate for Jenny, who had been accustomed to it in her native country; and, after we had finished, I was preparing myself to hear some account of the young stranger, and also from Fritz a description of his adventures and doings during the five days of his absence. But he set aside my curiosity by reminding me that the cachalot whale must not be allowed to remain under the burning sun, if we wished to obtain any thing from it.

"Is any part of it edible?" asked Ernest.

"I think not," I replied; "but, like other whales, it is useful for its oil, as well as for a beautiful white waxy substance, known as 'spermaceti,' found in the enormous head, which sometimes furnishes as much as twenty tons. This will be very useful to us, as it makes the best of candles. My only trouble will be to find vessels enough to carry it away."

"We use hempen sacks in England," said Jenny modestly. "Would you not try them? They would carry the spermaceti, I think."

This idea appeared so feasible that I had all our sacks emptied, and, after being well beaten on a flat stone to thicken them, they were placed on board the yacht, the

young men following with the two dogs and the jackal. Fritz, however, accompanied us in his canoe.

We were not long in reaching the sand-bank, where the monster lay drying in the sun; but no sooner were we alongside than the dogs, Brownie and Fawn, rushed towards it, and, before we could reach the spot, such howling, barking, and snarling were heard behind the stranded fish, that we feared the dogs had met with dangerous enemies.

We arrived in time to see a troop of wolves disputing fiercely with our dogs their right to the prey. Two of the wolves already lay dead on the sand, and two others were being held firmly by the dogs: the rest had fled. We also recognized a few jackals; and at this moment our tame jackal, which had remained close to Jack hitherto, caught sight of his fellows. Instinct was too strong for him: disregarding the calls or commands of his master, he started forward with a bound to join them.

Fritz would have fired at the deserter; but I prevented him from doing so, because I feared that my wife and the young stranger would be alarmed if they heard firing. Meanwhile, the wolves had been vanquished by our brave body-guard, who returned to us with ears greatly torn, and other bleeding wounds. Jack took charge of them, and, after a while, I saw with satisfaction that the poor animals were licking each other's wounds, which treatment I knew would prove a far better remedy than any salve.

The way being now clear, I seized one of the sacks, and held it open near the head of the creature, while Fritz mounted the slippery side of the mountain of flesh, and with one blow of his hatchet laid open the skull. By using a scoop, I quickly filled the sacks, one after another, with a good store of spermaceti, which we carried on

board the yacht, with the four dead wolves, and returned to the little island shortly before the dinner-hour.

I intended on the afternoon of this day to take the skin from the wolves, in doing which I required help from all the boys. Jack, however, was anxious to reclaim his jackal, and Fritz wished to carry the bags of spermaceti to Shark's Island on his canoe. I was, therefore, rather in a difficulty.

"I will recover the jackal," said Jenny, with a smile, "if Fritz will lend me his canoe to-morrow. I am not afraid of going alone," she added; "and when you hear my history you will understand why. I shall only require some pieces of a wolf's skin."

I was surprised at this daring spirit in so young a girl; but I agreed to her proposal willingly, for I could see that my younger sons were inclined to treat the matter as a joke. Jack remained at the island with his two brothers to assist me in skinning the wolves, while Fritz started in his canoe to carry the bags of spermaceti to Shark's Island.

During the evening and part of the night, Jenny was employed in the cabin with the mother in cutting out and making a muzzle of the pieces of wolf's skin. She rose early, and after breakfast was provided with a flask of fresh water and a basket of provisions. Fritz wished to assist her; but she sprang lightly on board the canoe unaided, and paddled out into the bay with a cleverness and ease that surprised us all.

On reaching the sand-bank, as she told us afterwards, she passed round it at first, and landed on the banks of the stream near the wood; but there appeared no signs of the jackal. She had brought with her from the canoe meat and water to tempt him, and at last she stood still,

and, raising her voice, called "Hunter, Hunter!" in gentle, friendly tones. Then she wandered from point to point at a little distance, and, calling his name again, saw the poor animal slowly approaching, and looking almost dead with hunger. She threw him a piece of sopped biscuit, still cautiously approaching nearer, and at last placed before him some pemmican moistened with water in a calabash-shell. While he was eating it, she threw round his neck a piece of cord, speaking kindly all the time, and then, still holding the end of the cord, filled the calabash-shell with water, which he eagerly drank. It was not difficult, after this, to place the muzzle on his nose, and lead him to the canoe. He submitted without a struggle: indeed, he seemed to be fascinated with his new mistress, allowing her even to tie his hind-legs loosely together, and place him before her on the deck of the canoe.

All this occupied time, and it was not until nearly noon that we espied the canoe approaching. As it drew nearer, we all stood on the shore and saw the little maiden paddling bravely towards the land, with the jackal seated gravely in front of her like a regular passenger, and looking so comical with his new muzzle, that the canoe was received, on reaching the land, with shouts of laughter.

Hunter was quickly released from his muzzle and his bonds. He appeared so humbled and ashamed of himself, that we had no doubt he had been scouted by his own species, and left to starve.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE ADVENTURES OF FRITZ. — JENNY'S HISTORY.

I HAD now become anxious to return to Rock Castle; but, before doing so, it was necessary to visit the spot, near the burning mountain, at which Jenny had left all that she had saved from shipwreck.

I also felt that this was the time to hear an account of the adventures of Fritz during his five days' absence, and a little of the history of this young girl, whom we had received as a dear daughter and sister.

After dinner, therefore, on the day of the jackal's return, we seated ourselves on the shore to listen to Fritz. Jenny retired to her little recess near the tree, with a book Ernest had lent her. She shrank from hearing a description of herself and her doings, and judged rightly that Fritz would speak more freely in her absence.

"You will remember," he began, "that, when I paddled away from the boat, I intended to proceed at once to the open sea. I was full of energy, but conscious of danger, and agitated with a thousand fears respecting the safety of this poor shipwrecked English girl. Still I did not lose courage, and, after commending myself to the care of Providence, I became more hopeful; and the idea that, if I dared this expedition, it would lead to association with fellow-beings, and perhaps furnish the means of our leaving this isolated position, grew almost to certainty in my mind.

"On reaching the open sea, the wind, although light,

came from a quarter likely to carry me among dangerous rocks if it blew with greater force, and I had scarcely reached Pearl Bay when a gale arose which threatened to

JENNY READING.

drive me on the rocky shore; so that I dared not venture farther out to sea, lest the waves should overpower my little skiff. Towards evening the wind lulled, and on my knees I thanked God for my preservation.

"I could not, however, venture on shore, but finding a corner for the canoe beneath an overhanging rock, sufficiently protected from the wind, as well as inaccessible to wild beasts, I slept peacefully on a heap of sand and broken rocks, between two large stones, after eating my supper of cold meat, for I feared to light a fire, lest it should attract enemies.

"I had a refreshing night, even on my hard couch; and on rising next morning, with lighter spirits, found myself near a coast quite unknown to me. I still kept close inshore, examining the summit of every elevation of rock or hill, with the hope of discovering some sign of a volcano.

"The coast was sandy and barren, but I could see outlines of thick forests in the distance; and, as I drew nearer, I noticed that the boughs and lower stems were covered with a wonderful growth of creeping plants. I took these creepers for pepper-plants; for a large number of toucans, or pepper-birds, who feed on this fruit, surrounded the canoe.

"I ceased paddling now and then for a while, to watch these birds, which were lively and even playful in their movements. They would break off the little pepper-grapes, throw them in the air, and catch them most cleverly in their open beaks.

"Very shortly I found myself in a vast extent of ocean, although really a bay; and in one point an arm of the sea ran inland from it, which I determined to explore.

"After remarking that the tide had just turned, and would carry me onward for some distance, I rested my paddle, and gave myself up to the enjoyment of the charming scenery which lay spread out on both sides of the stream. At length, to my surprise, I discovered that

this beautiful country was not only occupied by birds of varied plumage, which made the air melodious with their songs, but by elephants, hippopotami, and even glistening serpents, and, in spite of the heat, I paddled quickly for miles, before I could find a spot on which it appeared safe to land.

"After some hours I came upon a calm and peaceful country, where no sound disturbed the stillness but the twitter of birds, the humming of bees, and the rushing of a waterfall from the distant rocks.

PARROT.

"Here I landed, and, finding a number of fine oysters on the beach, lighted a fire, and cooked some for my supper; then, mooring my canoe to a large stone, and pushing it from the shore, determined to sleep on board, as the safest place.

"I awoke early, and with a thankful heart proceeded on my way till about noon, when, feeling tired, I determined to land near a little wood, in which a great number of parrots kept up a tremendous chattering and screaming.

"Here, as all appeared safe, I released my eagle, uncovered his eyes, and set him free to find his own breakfast and mine. He soon returned with a parrot, which I gave him for himself, and then fired among the trees,

where I had observed many larger birds than parrots, which I thought would be agreeable eating.

"Two fell, and, while picking them up, I heard behind me a rustling among the trees, like the movements of a sea-crab or turtle. I turned at the sound, and saw, with a sinking heart, an enormous tiger not more than ten or

TIGER.

fifteen paces from me. It was too late to run, for with one bound he could have reached me.

"For a moment I stood motionless; then upon the tiger's head pounced the eagle, dazzling the beast with his broad, flapping wings, and fiercely attacking his head with beak and claws.

"I took courage. The tiger, engaged in defending himself, did not notice me, and, approaching nearer, I shot him through the head. But I could scarcely rejoice over my victory, for in his fall the eagle, whose talons

were embedded in the tiger's skin, fell with him, and was crushed to death beneath the animal's weight.

"I lifted the remains of my faithful pet from under the monster, and with tears carried it to the canoe, feeling that his last act had been his greatest, for he had saved my life at the expense of his own. I have brought him home to be stuffed, and placed in our museum."

This account of the eagle's death pained us all greatly, although the excitement caused by the new arrival had so occupied us, that the creature's absence had been unnoticed. No remark, however, was made to interrupt Fritz, who continued his narration.

"I quitted the place in sadness, being too anxious to continue my journey to spare time for skinning the tiger, whose striped fur was very beautiful; yet, as I paddled on, a feeling of discouragement came over me, and I had almost determined to give up attempting to discover the sender of the message, when suddenly a number of lofty rocks appeared in the distance, and from one of the peaks there rose a slight wreath of fire-tinged smoke.

"This sight filled me with new life. I hastened forward with all my strength, and at length reached the base of the mountainous rock, which rose from the centre of a small but fertile island.

"I had to paddle for some distance along the coast before I could discover a suitable landing-place, for the slopes of the rock extended in some points to the water's edge. At last, reaching a shingly beach, spreading inland for some distance, and bounded on the right by a little forest that clothed the mountain's side, I sprang on shore, and, after walking for a little distance, came suddenly on a bend in a chain of rocks, and beheld, with joyful astonishment, the first human being I had seen for many years

besides those of my own family,—a youthful figure dressed like a boy, and seated near the burning rock by which I had been guided.

"When within a few paces, I said with deep emotion, 'Welcome, shipwrecked daughter of England! I am come to rescue you. God in his mercy has helped me to find you, and answer your appeal for aid.'

"I have often feared that my pronunciation of English words made them difficult to be understood; but Jenny seemed to comprehend. She spoke to me in French, as she does now to us all, but was so agitated and timid, that I could scarcely make her aware of the change that awaited her.

"I was myself almost too much overcome to explain; but at length we became more composed, and able to ask questions and make replies that were satisfactory.

"Seating myself by her side, I told her of our own shipwreck, and how my parents, three brothers, and myself, had lived on an uninhabited island for ten years, had cultivated the land, and made homes of our own, and had now sheep and cattle, and poultry in abundance.

"She seemed surprised at this recital, and scarcely able to believe it; and yet, as she told me, she had made herself a nest in the thick branches of a tree in the forest, and the things she had saved from the wreck were stowed away in a grotto near where we sat.

"'I am wearing a sailor-boy's clothes,' she said, blushing, 'because I can climb the tree better, and move about more freely, while I am alone; but, before you take me to your relations, I must change my dress.'"

"And did she tell you about herself or her relations, Fritz?" I asked, "or any thing of the ship in which she was wrecked?"

"Oh, yes! She told me that her father, a major in an English regiment, had been in India for many years; that she had lost her mother when only seven years old."

The history of this young girl, which in good time we heard, shall here be related. After the death of his wife, the major's pride in his dearly-loved and only child made him determine, not only to take charge of her education himself, but to bring her up to ride like an Amazon, and even accustom herself to the use of fire-arms; in short, to be fit for any society, and yet able to act with courage and self-dependence in case of peril or reverse of fortune.

"The natural aptitude of Miss Montrose made her, with this training, even at the age of seventeen, a self-controlled, accomplished girl, as clever in the management of a gun and a horse as in more womanly accomplishments.

"At about this time Major Montrose was promoted to the command of a detachment of soldiers in the service, who were going to Europe in a transport ship-of-war, with a number of invalid soldiers. His daughter of course could not accompany him on board a man-of-war to England, and, as the major was unwilling to leave her behind in India, he took a passage for her in a fast-sailing passenger-ship, intrusting her to the care of his friend Captain Greenfield, who commanded it; hoping that his daughter would arrive in England, under proper care, as soon as himself.

"Miss Montrose, therefore, went cheerfully, on board the corvette 'Dorcas,' under the care of Captain Greenfield, sailing two days before her father from the Hooghly, at the mouth of the Ganges.

"The voyage for the first few days was pleasant and

Amazon: Woman of an ancient Eastern nation who trained themselves in warlike pursuits.

prosperous; but the appearance of a French frigate and a frightful storm drove the 'Dorcas' far out of her course, and prevented her from reaching the harbor of the Island of Batavia, as the captain had hoped to do.

"Driven still farther eastward by stormy and adverse winds, the ship at last struck on a rock on the northern coast of New Guinea, and the sailors and passengers had only time to throw themselves into the boats on an unknown sea, and endeavor to find a shore on which to land in safety. In the darkness of night the boats were soon separated, and the one containing Jenny Montrose became a complete wreck on the rocks which surrounded our lonely island, and, strange to say, the young girl was the only one who escaped.

"She described to me," continued Fritz, "her recovery from the insensibility which had been caused by the fierceness with which the waves had dashed her on the shore; and said that after rousing herself, and at once submitting to circumstances, she determined to search the lonely shore for the means of nourishment to keep her alive, for she still hoped that the boat had been saved, and would return for her.

"The few articles washed on shore, some of which were her own, and a sailor's chest or locker, containing, among other useful things, a tinder-box and matches, were very acceptable. She could now light a fire and prepare her own food, which consisted of fish, oysters, mussels, and fruit of several kinds. The sailor-boy's dress, which she had hastily assumed when the ship struck, she still wore, as you know, when we found her.

"Being a good swimmer, she knew it was a more safe

England and France were at this period at war.
Before lucifer-matches were even thought of.

dress, in case of danger on the sea, than female attire. Indeed, she assured me that, had she not been able to swim when the boat was capsized, nothing could have saved her. Yet most of all is she thankful that God, in his great mercy, not only saved her life but sent the wounded albatross, to be tended and cared for till it was well enough to carry a message to those who could rescue her."

It was midnight before this account was finished. She had passed us, with a pleasant good-night, on the way to her sleeping-berth on board the yacht, and, full of gladness at this addition of a dear daughter and sister to our family circle, we all rose to retire to rest.

We assembled at breakfast next morning with feelings of near relationship to the young English stranger, and more than ever anxious to take her to our home at Rock Castle. I entreated her to look upon my wife and myself as her parents till we could communicate with Major Montrose.

She could not remember the date of the shipwreck, and had not kept account of the days and weeks as they passed on that lonely island.

Fritz asked her how long a time elapsed before the albatross returned with our message in answer to hers.

"Oh!" exclaimed Jenny, "I was getting quite sad and despairing when the bird returned with those words in English, 'Trust in God, help is at hand,' fastened to his leg. I was beginning to feel as if I was the only human being in the world, and that I was left alone among the rocks to die; but I shall never despair again, for I have learned to trust him always. Besides, has he not given me new parents and brothers, whom I can love and trust? I hope I shall prove as useful and childlike to them as they can wish."

"You cannot be more thankful for meeting with us," I exclaimed, "than are we at being able to save you. A dear helper you will be to us, my daughter, and welcome as long as you remain."

"Perhaps, dear Jenny," said the mother, "you may be even happier here, as a member of our little colony, than in a world overladen with a host of cares in every class of society. At all events, I am rejoiced to have found a daughter who is so able and willing to help me in my advancing years, and be to me truly as a daughter."

All was bustle and haste when we had finished breakfast. The provision and articles useful at meals were quickly carried on board, with Jenny's box and other things brought from the cave under the burning rock; Fritz hastened to prepare his canoe; while his brothers hoisted sail on board the pinnace, and got every thing in readiness for the voyage.

We started early. The morning was delightful, the sea calm, excepting for a slight ripple, caused by the gentle breeze which carried us towards our colony, and I determined to proceed towards Cape Disappointment, landing first at Prospect Hill, which we reached before sunset.

Jenny had observed our watch-tower, with its guard-house, cannons, and flag, on the heights of Shark's Island, near which we passed. But her delight was still greater when we landed at Prospect Hill, and proceeded through the farm and plantations to our Kamtschatkan summer-house in the trees. She paused in front of it, and exclaimed, "Why, this is Fairyland! I can scarcely believe it is true."

Seated at supper in the cool tent which we erected, Jenny found it all true, and retired with the mother to the dwelling in the tree to rest, feeling as if a new life

had been opened to her even on a desert isle. The boys and I lighted our watch-fires, and slept peacefully in the tent.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE WELCOME AT ROCK HOUSE. — CONCLUSION.

ON the next day the young men took their new sister to the farm at Wood Grange. Her pleasure at once more beholding a beautiful landscape with noble trees and verdant meadows was almost childlike in its earnestness; and she was equally delighted with the domestic animals. The sheep and cattle grazing in the meadow, the goats with their kids, the pigs, the fowls, the turkeys, guinea-hens, ducks, and geese filled her with wonder, when found on an island which ten years before had been uninhabited.

After looking over the farm, we set sail, and, leaving Falcon's Nest for another visit, proceeded to Whale Island, Fritz and Frank remaining behind to carry out plans of their own.

The rabbits greatly pleased our young visitor. I told her she must now look upon them as her own property, and that I hoped she would soon have time and inclination to prepare and weave their silky hair for her own use.

We next steered towards Deliverance Bay, and on reaching the entrance a grand salute of twelve shots re-echoed from rock to rock. Ernest thought it should have been thirteen. He had read, he said, that a salute of honor should always be in odd numbers. I therefore gave him

permission to follow that rule in our answer from the pinnace.

While passing Shark's Island, we saw Fritz and Frank coming to meet us in the canoe. They were soon alongside; and in a loud voice Fritz hailed us, exclaiming, "In the name of the whole colony of this island we bid you welcome to Rock Castle. We regret that we have not had the honor of your companionship in this voyage; but our duties at the castle have rendered it impossible." Then they led the way to Rock Castle, through the gardens, orchards, and shrubberies which lay on the rising ground that rose gently to our dwelling.

Jenny's surprise was at its height as she passed these signs of cultivation; but it grew to wonder as she gazed on the frontage of the castle in the rocks, with its broad balcony, its fountains, its large pigeon-houses, and the umbrageous foliage that crept over columns and roof.

My surprise and that of my wife equalled the young girl's when I saw a table laid out in the veranda with every article that could be gathered for it, new or old, European or the production of the island. Home-made china, bamboo and cocoa-shell vessels, glass tumblers, decanters, spoons, and forks, from the captain's chest, were upon the table, and not empty.

Canary-wine and mead in flasks, splendid pine-apples resting on green leaves, oranges in pyramids, filling the china dishes; fresh milk from the cow in calabash-bowls, while the centre of the table was occupied by dishes containing cold fowl, ham, and dried fish; and, fastened at each end of the veranda, a bird with outstretched wings, from our museum. Over the table was suspended a large piece of linen cloth, on which had been placed many-colored flowers, forming, in large letters, the following words: —

"Welcome to Jenny Montrose, and may blessings attend her entrance into the home of the Swiss Robinsons!"

Too much overcome to speak in reply to this welcome, the young girl stood still till I took her hand and led her to a seat between the mother and myself. Ernest and Jack seated themselves opposite us; but Fritz and Frank, who considered themselves the entertainers, would not sit down, but waited upon us with table-napkins on their arms, carving the joints, pouring the wine, and changing the plates, like waiters at a hotel.

After dinner the young men took upon themselves the task of showing Jenny their beautiful Rock Castle, to the maiden's great wonder and delight. To the house and the cave, through gardens and fields, to the winter stalls of the animals, the cart, sledge, and boat-houses, they led her with eager anxiety, not wishing to leave a single corner unnoticed, till the mother, fearing the poor girl would be tired, went out and good-naturedly relieved her from the services of these thoughtless cavaliers.

On the following day we were ready early, and after breakfast started to pay a visit to Falcon's Nest. I considered it advisable for us all to go, as some repairs and arrangements were sure to be necessary, which would occupy us for several days.

Our beasts of burden were all at Falcon's Nest: we had, therefore, to perform the journey on foot. Jack, to the great amusement of Jenny, mounted the ostrich, and rode on quickly in advance. At the end of a quarter of an hour he returned with a troop of animals, and amongst them the ox, the buffalo, and the onager; but nothing could induce Jenny to ride any one of them.

We found, as I expected, a great deal to do in repairing

our aerial castle and the stables for the animals, in readiness for the rainy season, which was drawing near.

The young men were therefore busily engaged every day till the evening; and the mother had a loving and useful companion in Jenny, who helped her in cooking and needlework. She quickly became accustomed to the beasts of burden, and allowed Jack to place her on his buffalo, which she soon learned to ride fearlessly.

The work at Falcon's Nest employed us a whole week; but the time passed pleasantly, although threatening clouds, and now and then a shower, drove us to the shelter of our castle in the tree, or to the gallery around it over the stables. The presence of the young girl, and her gay talk, were new to my boys, and inspired them with fresh energy.

Before returning to Rock Castle, we went to Wood Grange, to gather in a store of rice and other useful articles, and especially straw for making mats and baskets, small canes for hurdles and hencoops, to be made indoors while the rain lasted.

On our return to Rock Castle, we formed quite a procession, — beasts and birds, apes and dogs, carriages and baskets, and Jenny on the buffalo, with Fritz as her protector. Although it was pleasant to observe the varied scenery of wood and meadow, rock and valley, and beyond all the great sea, we were glad, when we arrived, to be able to make ready our winter home. And we were only just in time; for the rains very shortly commenced, and were accompanied by storms of thunder and lightning. We again heard the roaring of the waves as they dashed against the shore, and knew by the howling winds that the season of winter and rain had come.

But this lonely period passed more pleasantly than ever,

thanks to dear Jenny, whose vivacity and accomplishments enlivened our hours of recreation. She taught us how to make mats, and even carpets, of plaited straw and rushes, while she amused us with tales of her life in England and India.

She also induced me to recall memories of our own native land, and listened earnestly to our descriptions of Switzerland and its mountains and valleys.

In the evenings, when we were all assembled, she assisted the boys in their study of English, and made them speak it so constantly, that Fritz in particular, who had studied it alone, became quite proficient.

She already spoke French, so that she soon acquired the Swiss language, which so much resembles it. In fact, this rainy season was a happy time; and when at last the sunshine of spring chased away the clouds, and the rain suddenly cleared, we could scarcely believe that so many weeks had elapsed since we had been first made prisoners.

But the beautiful spring, and the duties it brought in field, orchard, and garden, aroused us to activity; and Jenny was quite ready to join us, or to assist the mother in her poultry-yard or kitchen.

Fritz and Jack expressed a wish one morning to proceed to the heights of Shark Island, to examine the coast from our guard-house, and discover whether any signs of a wreck had been cast upon our shores during the season of storms. I advised them to search the horizon with the telescope, and also to fire two signal-guns, in case of a ship being near us and requiring assistance.

The shipwreck of Jenny's ship so near our coast made us imagine it possible that a similar disaster might occur again.

The young girl, although she had learned to love us all,

especially "mother," as she called her, would yet sometimes express an anxiety to hear of her father. We had no means of doing so, unless a ship might happen to touch at the island, or approach near it.

The young men proceeded to the heights to carry out their wishes as well as my own. I was not then aware of the longing for their own country which the appearance of the young girl from Europe had created in the minds of two of my sons.

Their excitement may perhaps be understood, when, after scanning the horizon and the coast without result, they fired two signal-guns, and were answered from a distance westward by three distinct shots.

They reached the shore by the shortest way, and, jumping on board the canoe, rowed with all their strength to the beach, where I stood.

"What is it? what has happened?" I asked, as I noticed their excitement.

"O father, father! have you not heard?" was the reply, as they rushed into my arms.

I had not heard a sound, and could not at all comprehend the meaning of this agitation.

"We heard three cannon-shots in answer to ours!" cried Fritz.

"The echo of your own," I replied; for I could not imagine any thing else possible.

"No, father," he said; "we have often heard the echo from our own firing, but not like this. The third report was too long after ours to be an echo."

I knew not what to think. I had never considered what I should do in the event of the arrival of a European ship. But was this a European ship, or Malay pirates, or a ship with the crew and passengers in danger on some dangerous

coast? I knew not. I therefore assembled my household, and we took counsel together, for it was a matter of great importance.

Meanwhile night drew near, and we put off all further action till the following day, except that I gave orders to my three elder sons to watch with me in turn, from hour to hour, in the veranda, and listen during the still night air for any signal-gun.

Although the first part of the night was calm, a storm arose about midnight; and the howling wind and pelting raindrops made it impossible to hear any sound.

For two days and nights the storm raged, and not until the third morning broke, clear and bright, could I venture to our guard-house. Jack accompanied me, carrying a large flag, to be raised or lowered, as a signal to those at home whether we had good news, or were threatened with danger.

The sea was still rough, but the air clear, and I decided that Jack should fire three times, and then listen for the reply, for I still had my suspicions that it was only the echo. Jack fired, leaving an interval of two minutes between each shot.

We listened attentively, and presently through the air came the boom of a distant cannon; a pause of two minutes, and then a second and a third. Seven shots altogether sounded in our ears.

Jack began dancing about like one inebriated, while I hastily raised the signal-flag, and waved the other brought by Jack over my head.

Then I remembered that we knew not whether the guns we had heard were fired by friends or enemies.

In olden times, ships that had a crew of robbers were called pirate vessels. These sea-robbers attacked richly-laden ships, and took all they contained, often killing the crew and passengers to enable them to do so.

"What a fool I have been to raise the flag," I cried, "and perhaps raise false hopes!"

I instantly re-charged the guns, and, telling Jack to remain as sentinel, hastened to Rock Castle.

My household were in a state of great agitation as they came forward to meet me, full of earnest inquiry and curiosity. I explained the shots we had heard, but was obliged to tell the truth respecting my fears; but I announced my intention of going in the boat with Fritz to explore the coast, and, if possible, discover the vessel.

We took on board arms and sabres, with guns and pistols, to be used, if needful, in self-defence, and the harpoons to be carried as lances, and steered to the left round a rocky promontory, which we had never yet passed, and that stretched far into the sea.

On reaching the extreme end of this point or cape, we found ourselves at the entrance of a little bay, and, cautiously advancing, we espied a large ship, evidently European, with the English flag flying at the masthead; though our hearts rose in earnest thankfulness to God at this discovery, I still felt the necessity of caution.

I could scarcely prevent Fritz from rushing into the sea, — indeed, I felt almost inclined to do the same myself, — but I remembered that the Asiatic pirates often carried the flags of other nations, for purposes of their own. I decided, however, to venture nearer, and find out to whom the vessel really belonged.

We rowed slowly forward, close within shore, examining the stranger curiously. It appeared to be a small frigate, lightly laden, and with eight or ten tolerably large guns on each side. She lay at anchor at a distance from land, as if for repairs; and on the shore we saw three tents, from which smoke arose, making us suppose it was the dinner-

hour of the crew. An officer presently appeared on deck, in the uniform of the English navy, whom sharp-sighted Fritz considered must be the captain.

We approached within hail of the ship, and in a moment the question came through the speaking-trumpet, "What are you?"

"Englishmen," was the reply by Fritz, in English.

"What ship?"

"No ship. We will come again."

Without another word we turned away, and rowed quickly round the point. We had discovered that the strangers were English, that the vessel was a man-of-war frigate, and that now we could visit them, and offer them hospitality.

This joyful news caused great excitement at home; and the mother advised that we should get the pinnace in readiness, and go in state to visit the English ship, and not as adventurers in a poor little canoe.

This proposal was received with great acclamations. Jenny was unusually excited: indeed, we were scarcely able to sleep, for thinking of the morrow's voyage, when we should meet so many of our fellow-creatures, and perhaps learn news of the home we had lost for so many years.

The pinnace was quickly prepared next morning, and bedecked with flags, as for a joyful occasion; and before noon we were all on board, neatly attired, and with a fair wind steering towards the point beyond which was the bay in which the frigate lay at anchor.

As we approached within a short distance, we hoisted the English flag.

Great was the astonishment of the ship's company as our pretty vessel proceeded proudly up the bay, and, when

within gunshot of the frigate, we dropped anchor, and greeted them from our deck with loud cheers.

Fritz and I stepped on board the boat of the pinnace, and rowed to the ship to pay our respects to the captain. He received us with great politeness, and, after inviting us on board, led us to his cabin, and brought out some old Cape wine, in a most friendly manner.

He then inquired to what good fortune he owed a visit from gentlemen carrying an English flag, and in such outlandish seas as these.

I briefly explained the circumstances which had brought me to a neighboring island, and how for ten years I had struggled, with my wife and four sons, against difficulties which were happily overcome. I mentioned the name of Jenny Montrose, and spoke of her father, now Sir William Montrose, and Captain Greenfield, who was taking her to England, when his ship was wrecked not far from our island, giving an account of the young lady's discovery by us.

All the parties I spoke of were known to the captain, who told me his name was Littlestone, that he commanded the frigate "Unicorn," and was on his way to the Cape of Good Hope with despatches from New South Wales. He had been driven on the coast by stress of weather, hoping to find a friendly port; but, as none appeared, had chosen this bay as a place of shelter, and had anchored here for a time, till the damage done to the ship might be made good. He had heard the shots, and answered them, and was pleased to find that they had been the means of leading us to visit the ship.

Before leaving, I invited the captain to visit my yacht, which he readily promised to do on the following day.

Accordingly, on the next morning, a man-of-war's boat

arrived with Captain Littlestone. He brought with him an invalid gentleman named Wolston, who, with his wife and two little daughters, aged ten and twelve, had been saved from a wreck, and carried on board the frigate.

Mr. Wolston had intended to proceed to the Cape of Good Hope and remain, in the hope of recruiting his health and strength, but, on hearing an account of our territory from Captain Littlestone, was anxious to be introduced to us. We received our visitors cordially, and poor Jenny seemed overjoyed at meeting one who knew her father. I presented the captain with two baskets of English and foreign fruit of our own cultivation, which, to sailors who had seen no land for weeks, was a great boon. It made him more than ever anxious to visit the island, and see the gardens and orchards which had produced such fruit.

After a stay of two days near the "Unicorn," we returned to our island, and on the following day Fritz, in his canoe, sailed to the vessel to pilot the man-of-war's boat, with the captain and Mr. Wolston, to our shores. Their surprise at all they saw on the island, as well as at the prosperous condition of our flocks and herds, was only equalled by the wonder they expressed at our dwellings, and especially Rock Castle.

Mr. Wolston, indeed, expressed a wish to remain with us on the island, if we could also receive his wife and two daughters; to which arrangement we readily agreed, feeling naturally that the two girls, though young, would be companions for Jenny.

"And now, Miss Montrose," said the captain, "what am I to do for you? I cannot offer to take you as a passenger in a man-of-war, as it is against the rules; but as soon as I reach England I will inquire about your father, and without doubt a vessel will be sent to these shores to

enable you all to return to your native countries. - - What say you to that, my friend?" added the captain, addressing me.

My wife and I had already talked the matter over, so that I was ready at once to reply.

"No, Captain Littlestone, I have no wish to leave this pleasant island, nor the homes which, by the blessing of God, are the result of our labor and industry; and my wife also is willing to live and die here; but as to my sons" —

I paused, for I could see by the eager glances of Fritz and Jack what their answer would be.

"Father," said Fritz, "Jack and I have been for years longing for this opportunity of returning to Europe. May we have your permission? — Mother," he added, with deep emotion, "can you spare us?" And he rose and placed his arm around her neck, for, although she had feared this result, she was scarcely prepared to meet it.

"Talk it over, my friends, talk it over," said the captain, "and let me know your decision before I sail, which will be in about a week."

And so it was arranged. The man-of-war's boat was to bring Mr. and Mrs. Wolston and their two daughters in a few days, and the decision respecting our sons was to be sent back in a letter by the crew, unless, which was not unlikely, the captain came himself.

Captain Littlestone came, as I expected, and I was charmed with the little daughters of Mr. Wolston. I knew that their residence with us would involve great alterations; yet that was of no consequence when we considered the advantage of companionship for ourselves and our children.

It was at last decided, that, when a ship came from

England for Jenny Montrose, my two sons should accompany her to that country. Then the captain addressed me:—

"My friend," he said, "you have laid the foundation of a new colony among these islands. On reaching England I shall lay the matter before the government, if you are willing to acknowledge that government, and to become subjects of the King of England. Shall I propose for this colony the name New Switzerland?"

For a few moments my heart was too full to speak; but at last I said, "The name will be an honor to me, and I shall be proud of being the subject, as a colonist, of the British realm."

This answer was received by my sons with shouts of approval and the universal cry, "New Switzerland, hurrah! hurrah!"

And then, with warm congratulations, and hopes of meeting again, the captain stepped on board the man-of-war's boat, and amidst the hearty cheers of the sailors, and the waving of handkerchiefs from the shore, Captain Littlestone sailed away from our island, standing in the boat to wave his cocked hat in farewell to us all.

* * * * * *

Six months passed and the autumn was approaching; but as yet no ship had reached our shores. Great additions and alterations had been made in our dwellings. Several chambers were formed, by encroaching upon the interior of our salt-cavern, to provide winter accommodation for Mr. Wolston and his family. To our surprise, while digging farther back in the cave, we had come suddenly upon another opening in the rock, at the extreme end of the cave.

In 1814, George III. was King.

With the help of my sons, and the assistance of Mr. Wolston, whose health had greatly improved, we formed at this part of the cave a dwelling similar to our own, and erected a veranda and pigeon-house; and at the end of the six months, the former was already covered with creeping plants.

As to the ladies, they had spinning-wheels and weaving-machines. They made linen and flannel and cloth; they knitted stockings, made and mended our clothes, helped in the cooking (for we all took our meals together), the younger ones being trained by my wife to make useful and clever housekeepers.

The books and drawing materials brought by Minnie and Lucy Wolston were a great advantage both to themselves and Jenny. The latter was able to sketch and paint landscapes and flowers from nature, and to teach the two girls what she knew herself of the art. She had, moreover, other pupils in the rainy season, for, by the light of spermaceti candles, the young men under Jenny's guidance could amuse themselves for hours with this pleasant accomplishment.

And so the six months wore away. The rainy season was just over, when, one morning, Jack, who had been on the lookout for some time, heard a gun fired at sea. He rushed into the field, where I was busy with Fritz, exclaiming, "Father, there is a signal-gun! Did you not hear it?"

"No," I replied; but at that moment there came the report of another.

Fritz threw down his spade.

"Go and answer them, Jack," he cried, as he ran towards the shore. "It is the English ship we expect; they want a pilot."

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I was left alone with a full heart, and for a few minutes was unable to move. These guns were a signal that I should lose my boys and my adopted daughter. At last I turned towards Rock Castle, and found my wife sitting at work in the veranda.

"It has come at last," I said sadly.

"What has come?" she asked in a trembling voice.

"The ship from England," I replied.

She turned very pale, but said presently, "It is God's will: we cannot keep the young birds in the nest always."

Louder and stronger reports aroused us, and my wife, rising, accompanied me to the shore, from which we could look across the bay.

There, in full sail, came a stately ship, which presently entered Deliverance Bay, and approached as near the shore as the depth of the water would allow. Then from the deck rose cheers, that were re-echoed from the rocks, bringing Ernest and Frank, and every inmate of the dwelling, to the spot on which we stood.

"A ship from England!" exclaimed Jenny Montrose; "it is come for me! O mother, mother, how can I leave you?" And she threw herself into the arms of the adopted mother whose love she had won.

Ernest and Frank looked grave and were silent. Meanwhile there was great commotion on the beach: the ship's boat was landing passengers, among whom were Jack and Fritz.

"They are come for us, mother!" they exclaimed as they approached; but her pale face and tearful eyes checked their eager joy.

"Father," said Fritz, "here is the captain. He has brought letters for you and Miss Montrose."

I took mine quietly. One of them was evidently a gov

ernment despatch; the others were from my friends in Switzerland. Jenny seized hers, and ran away to read it alone; while only my wife had the presence of mind to invite the captain to our home, and offer him hospitality.

It proved as I expected. An English vessel, with emigrants to New South Wales, had been chartered to call at a bay in a certain latitude and longitude; but the captain, being rather alarmed at the appearance of the rocky coast, had fired two signal-guns, in the hope of finding a pilot for his ship in these dangerous waters. He understood, he said, that he had to take back with him at least three passengers, a lady and two gentlemen, and, as he should sail in three days, he hoped they would be ready to accompany him.

The captain spent a pleasant evening with us, promising to return on the morrow, to go over the estate with me. He congratulated me on the colonization of "New Switzerland," and made himself altogether agreeable. But it was only by a great effort that my wife, Fritz, and myself could converse or listen.

We longed for an hour to talk over alone this sudden separation; and both my wife and I felt sure that Fritz had another question to ask before he decided to sail to England.

The brothers understood his wish to be alone with his mother and myself. Jenny also seemed a little conscious; and, when they retired to rest, she rose quickly to follow their example.

But, when she approached to wish my wife good-night, she could only throw her arms about her neck, and exclaim, amidst her tears, "Dear mother, how can I leave you and dear father, after all? Papa's letter requests my return to England with the captain, and I must go."

"My dear daughter," I said, for the mother seemed unable to speak, "we have no right to keep you here. And now cheer up, Jenny. You will, perhaps, be able to visit us again in this island some day with your husband."

She blushed and smiled through her tears as she wished me good-night.

"Father, do you know my secret?" he asked.

"I do know it, my son," I replied; "but, without the unqualified consent of Sir William Montrose, I cannot encourage your hopes. Have you said any thing to Jenny?"

"No, father, not a word; I only speak of it to you, that I may be free to ask her father's approval when we reach England. — Mother," continued he, "could you receive Jenny as a daughter?"

"With the greatest love and confidence," she replied; "and, although you are both going to leave us, it will be a happy day for me when I hear that she is your wife."

The young man's heart seemed too full for words: the tears stood in his eyes, and at last, with an effort, he pressed my hand, took his mother in his arms, and exclaiming, "I bless God for my parents!" hurried from the room.

Next day all was bustle and activity; the sailors' chests were brought out and packed with every thing considered necessary for the travellers. The spirit of activity appeared to rule the household, while many gifts were exchanged between the young people, to be preserved as tokens of remembrance.

I gave the two young men a share of my possessions with which to begin the world, and, as a means of commerce, pearls, coral, precious stones, and other valuable

productions of the island, which I knew would be most precious in Europe.

I also gave them earnest counsel, which was founded on trust and confidence in God and my own experience. I reminded them of my teachings during their childhood and youth, and begged them never to wander from the paths of virtue, or forget the duty they owed to our heavenly Father, who, during our stay on the island, had preserved them in so many dangers.

As the young people were expected on board ship next day at four o'clock, I had invited the captain and officers to a farewell dinner.

They arrived in the boat which was to take the luggage on board, and I was glad of the opportunity to place in the hands of the captain several articles in my possession, belonging to the captain of the ship in which we had been wrecked, in the hope that possibly he might be still living.

I had placed them in a casket found in the captain's cabin, with the gold pieces and money, as well as a paper containing an account of the shipwreck, which I had compiled, and a list of the officers and crew of the ship.

The captain promised to make every inquiry, and to place the casket in safe keeping. He was also glad to supply me with guns and ammunition in exchange for provisions. I therefore sent on board cattle, sheep, and poultry, as well as salted meat, dried fish, vegetables and fruit of every kind, all of which were of the greatest value to him and the passengers.

For the sake of our travellers, we endeavored to be cheerful and in good spirits; and the agreeable good humor of the visitors made this task less difficult. At last, after two toasts, one to the prosperity of *New Switzer-*

land, and the other to the safe passage of our ship, the leave-taking came.

We preferred to say farewell on shore. The brothers, although pale with emotion at this their first separation, kept up bravely; but, when the last moment came, they threw themselves into each other's arms, quite regardless of the eyes of strangers. Jenny clung to the mother with streaming eyes, and was scarcely able to speak.

Then came the worst parting of all, — the mother from her two tall sons. But they were brave and hopeful: they embraced her fondly, and whispered hopes of another meeting with cheerfulness and encouragement. The mother's was the last kiss. She seated herself on a camp-stool near the shore, for she had no power to stand, and I stood by and held her hand. Ernest, behind his mother, threw his arm around her shoulders; while Frank, nearer the water, took off his cap as the boat moved, and gave three cheers, which were answered from all on board.

We watched the progress of the boat, saw our dear ones embark on board the vessel, and did not move from the spot till the good ship had rounded the point, and was out of sight.

* * * * * * *

Before he left, I placed in the hands of Fritz the journal of our doings on the island after we were shipwrecked, and desired him to employ a printer in Europe, and have it published.

I hoped that this simply-written story of our lives on the lonely island, if brought before the eyes of the young, would point out to them what great results may be achieved by industry and perseverance, in spite of difficulties, and, above all, prove to them that the blessing of God will rest on any undertaking which is carried on in a

right spirit, and with a firm confidence in his protection and assistance.

* * * * * * *

It is late in the night. On the morrow my dear ones will be far away.

My story is told. May God be with us and our absent ones! I greet thee, Europe; I greet thee, old Switzerland. May New Switzerland in the future be strong and flourishing, pious and happy as art thou.

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